



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

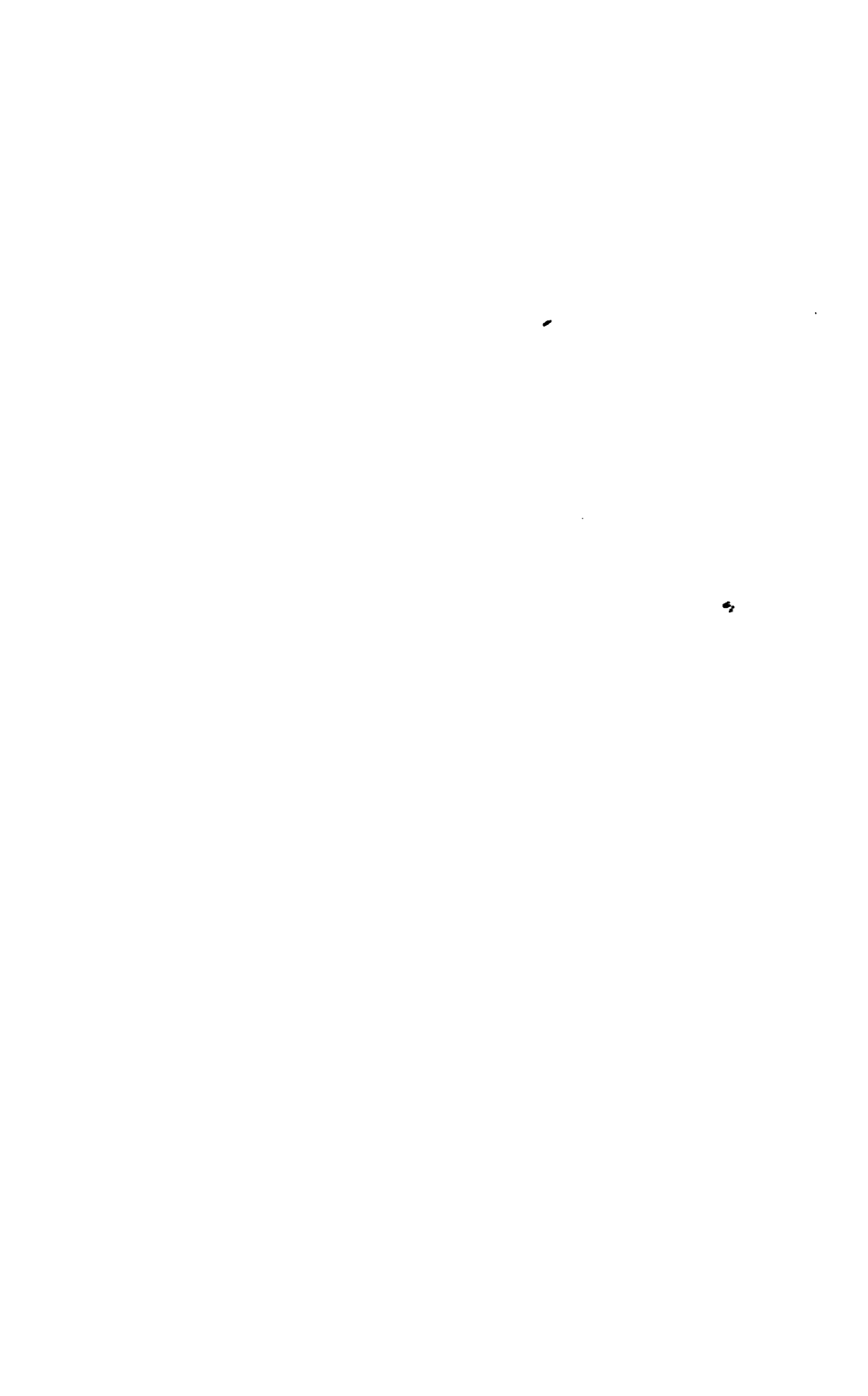
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

9pan 5978.1.43

HARVARD COLLEGE  
LIBRARY

Bought from the gifts  
of  
Friends of the Library





**GOMEZ ARIAS.**

PRINTED BY GUNNELL AND SHEARMAN, 13, SALISBURY-SQUARE.

**GOMEZ ARIAS;**

**OR,**

**THE MOORS OF THE ALPUJARRAS.**

**A SPANISH HISTORICAL ROMANCE.**

**BY**

**DON TELESFORO DE TRUEBA Y COSÍO.**

**IN THREE VOLUMES.**

**VOL. II.**

**LONDON:**

**HURST, CHANCE, AND CO.**

**65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.**

**1828.**

Span 5978.1.43  
✓

MARYARD COLLEGE LIBRARY  
THE GIFT OF  
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY  
Dec 23, 1937

3694  
49.208  
47-3

N



## NOTES to VOL. II.

---

### Note 1—page 59.

THE Persians, and even the Turks, when speaking of a brave man, generally compare him to a lion;—their poetry is full of this simile, and there is nothing more common than to hear them say *askan*, lion, or *caplan*, tiger.

---

### Note 2—page 100.

AT the period in which my Romance takes place, the revival of the art of painting was in its infancy. I am aware, therefore, that some scrupulous folks will be apt to find fault with me for having introduced a gallery of pictures with the same confidence as if I were writing a novel of the present day. Yet this seeming anachronism does not exist. The Moors, though they certainly could not boast of a Rafael or a Titian, had exercised themselves in the art, and, according to some authorities, even excelled in portrait painting. I do not intend to maintain that either the Moorish or Christian artists of the period had arrived at any eminence: for my purpose, it is enough that they *did* exist at the time: let imagination do the rest.

## Note 3—page 111.

In those times, when war was the only meritorious occupation of the *gentle* blood, the *Jews*, though despised and persecuted, were in some respects men of great consequence in a state. They were not only, as in the present day, the most expert and assiduous in money transactions, but cultivated the science of medicine with much success; when no other career was deemed compatible with honor and glory but the profession of arms or the church.

---

## Note 4—page 255.

On the hill of the Martyrs, so called from the supposed cruelties that the Moors had exercised against the Christian prisoners who fell into their hands, Queen Isabella caused a chapel to be erected, which became the object of many a pious pilgrimage.

# GOMEZ ARIAS;

OR,

## THE MOORS OF THE ALPUJARRAS.

---

### CHAPTER I.

Though I had the form  
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh;  
Nor, 'midst the creatures of clay that girded me,  
Was there but one, who—but of her anon.  
I said with men, and with the thoughts of men,  
I held but slight communion; but instead  
My joy was in the wilderness; to breathe  
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,  
Where the birds dare not build.

*Byron.*

Some secret venom preys upon his heart;  
A stubborn and unconquerable flame  
Creeps in his veins, and drinks the stream of life.

*Rowe.*

In the recess of a spacious apartment sat  
Cañeri, indolently reclining upon a pile of

cushions, after the manner of the Moors of distinction. He was descended from a family related to the old Moorish kings of Cordova, so that in consequence of his rank, and a certain influence which it obtained for him, he had been elected by the rebels as one of the principal leaders chosen to direct their enterprize. Weak, and vain-glorious, Cañeri evinced the utmost solicitude to maintain the semblance of a splendour which corresponded but indifferently with the poverty of his present state, and assumed an authority that ill assorted with the precarious tenure by which he held his power. Anxious to cling even to the shadow of a Court, he had appointed his officers, and regulated his household, with all the precision and etiquette of a petty sovereign. The mansion which he now inhabited had apparently belonged to some more wealthy person of the town of Alhacen, and had been studiously decorated with all the tapestry and other ornaments which could be collected together; but the faded and tattered condition of the materials, evidently indicated that

the days of their splendour had long since passed.

Cañeri was at this moment exhibiting the capricious disposition of a vain and would-be despot. Some half dozen miserable looking figures, who surrounded his couch, constituted his whole retinue, and appeared completely subservient to the ridiculous fancies of their master. But amongst these desperate ruffians, there was a man whose countenance and demeanor were calculated more particularly to attract the notice of a stranger. He sat at the right of Cañeri, and seemed, by the freedom of his language and manner, to possess the unlimited confidence of that chief. On what plea he could found his claim to such a distinction, would have been no easy matter to determine ; his countenance being remarkable only for a larger share of calm resolution, deep malignity, and ill-boding ferocity, than those of his companions. A broad and strongly built frame, dark and lowering features, black shaggy beard, and the savage glitter of an eye that scowled gloomily under its heavy

brow, gave to his whole appearance a most forbidding and sinister expression. Even when his features occasionally relaxed from their sternness, they only seemed to writhe into a peculiar sneer, which could not be contemplated without an involuntary shudder of terror and repugnance. Yet, even amidst this repulsive exterior, at times there could be traced a few sad remains of noble lines in that countenance, which spoke of hateful passions, long cherished within the breast. There was enough to induce the belief that this man had originally been capable of better feelings, and worthy a more honorable career.

This mysterious being, like the rest of Cañeri's train, was apparelled in a Moorish garb, remarkable only for its poverty and simplicity. But, though his appearance and attire bespoke the Moor, yet the expression of his features by no means corresponded with his exterior; and a penetrating eye could easily discover, that whatever might now be his profession, he had formerly belonged to

other creed and nation than that of the Moslem.

"Bermudo," said Cañeri, addressing himself to the personage in question, "thou art unusually abstracted to-day, far more than for some time past I have known thee."

"Bermudo!" exclaimed the other indignantly; "Bermudo! Call me no more by a name so hateful;—a name that brings to my recollection my miseries and my crimes. It is an ominous, a detested sound, that rings in my ear, to tell me that I was once a Christian—an injured man; and that I am *now*——"

"A valiant Moor," interrupted Cañeri.

"A vile renegade!" retorted Bermudo with a sneer. "A renegade; for thou canst not gild the bitter potion, nor will I attempt to disguise my character. I am a ruffian; but I have pledged myself to serve the Moors, and I *WILL* serve them faithfully, actively, to the last breath of my loathed existence."

"Thy services, indeed, have been most valuable," said Cañeri, "and grateful are

the Moors for the interest thou evincest in their cause."

"Tush," cried the renegade; "thank me not. It is not my love for the Moors that prompts my services, but my hatred to the Christians. No, Cañeri, I will not admit acknowledgments which I little deserve. You say that I am brave and active—'tis true. I can endure privations, and encounter dangers; but in so doing, I look not to advance the interests of the Moorish cause, but to serve that of my revenge. No, I anticipate no triumphs; I live merely for the gratification of vengeance for wrongs long past, but too deeply rooted in this heart to be ever forgotten." As he pronounced these last words his frame shook with agitation.

"Calm thyself, Alagraf," said Cañeri; "since thou hast adopted that name, and art now——"

"A traitor!" cried the renegade, interrupting him. "I am a traitor to my faith and country. Nay, do not attempt to palliate a name in



which I glory. I well know the vile thing that I am considered. My career is a dark one ; and the passion which fires my heart, and nerves my arm, cannot ennoble my deeds of valour, but may at least satisfy my craving : and that is enough—I am a villain ; but woe to the man who made me what I am. May the curse of despair, may the venom that festers here (and he forcibly smote his breast) poison and corrode the life of *him* who planted it in a heart kind by nature, and designed for virtue ; but by one bad man driven to revolting crime.”

“ Thy wrongs,” interposed Cañeri, “ shall be avenged ; and our cause, desperate as it seems, may still prosper. ’Tis true, we have lately sustained many reverses ; but el Feri de Benastepar yet lives, and even now may check the proud course of our enemies, and blight the verdant laurels of the Christian’s brow. Even now, perhaps, Alonso de Aguilar meets the doom to which his hate to the Moorish name so irresistibly impels him. We have resources left,—our forces may be less ; our courage greater.”

"Hold, Cañeri," cried the renegade; "if thou wilt deceive thyself, deceive not me,—thou canst not. I abhor the Christians, but why should I deny the melancholy truth that is daily forced upon our conviction? The Christians are our superiors, and we have to oppose to them, only the desperate, the frenzied power which springs from a sense of deep injuries sustained,—of wrongs carefully treasured up for the day of retribution."

"Alagraf !" returned Cañeri, somewhat hurt at the boldness and freedom of the renegade, "whatever may be the motives that urge thee to second our enterprise, forget not that mine and those of my companions originate in a cause more noble and dignified—It is to assert our rights as a free and independent nation."

"That," sneeringly muttered Bermudo, "may be the pretext; but I will neither discuss the merits of our undertaking, nor the justice of our cause. To me, at least, they are just and meritorious. I seek by my own exertions that redress which my humble sta-

tion could not procure, when matched against those to whom chance, not superior worth, gave power over me."

"Well," returned Cañeri; "whatever be thy motives, thy services have been most acceptable to us, and thy reward shall be proportionate to the value of thy assistance."

"Reward!" exclaimed the renegade, "I ask for no reward; thinkest thou, Moor, I would have been tempted to abandon the most sacred ties of country and religion for a reward?—Thinkest thou that for a bribe I could be instigated to become an open villain?—a thing despised? for ye all despise me, and must despise me,—nor can I feel offended."

"Despise thee!" cried Cañeri.

"Aye, despise me; for such as I must ever be despised, though their services may be most welcome. A reward! and what reward? Some paltry gold, perchance. No, Cañeri; I am at least a bold, not a mean ruffian, and I wish for no other reward save that which I can exact with my own hands. Ah! let me

strew the rankest thorns in the path of my wronger ! Let me throw a deepening cloud over the brilliancy of his hopes, and envenom all the springs of his affections and happiness ! Let me make him a thing to create abhorrence, and heap upon his head the shame and degradation that weigh me down ; and when he writhes in agony, let me enjoy his misery and despair, and hear him cry for mercy, and deny it him, as he denied it *her* ! Oh ! that I may watch his life as slowly it ebbs away, and then in that last tumult of anguish,—in that violent separation of the soul,—let me—let me pour into his afflicted ear my exulting voice, shrieking aloud *Anselma !*”

Callous as was the nature of Cañeri, he could not suppress an involuntary shudder, when he beheld the horrid picture which the renegade now exhibited. It was a fearful sight, for that gust of frenzied passion gave to his whole person the look of a demon : his frame shook violently, and as he grasped his weapon with nervous convulsion, those iron features became fraught with indescribable

---

hatred and revenge. But the storm passed rapidly away, and after a short struggle, the renegade again resumed his look of dark, imperturbable calmness, and relapsing into his wonted mood of gloomy abstraction, he recovered the cold fixed sneer which habit had rendered natural to his countenance.

At this time Malique claimed admittance, and advancing slowly towards the pile of cushions on which the vain-glorious Cañeri languidly reclined, failed not to present all those marks of reverence which so much delighted the chief, who conceived them indispensable to the support of his dignity. Malique, therefore, crossed his arms with the most abject air, inclined his head until it came nearly in contact with his knees, and with all the outward signs of humility made three times the Moorish obeisance. These tokens of submission Cañeri received with the haughtiness of manner peculiar to a despot, accustomed to command respect and adoration from his herd of slavish dependants.

"Malique," he then cried, "what brings

thee here? Why am I disturbed in my moments of privacy? What can induce thee to commit so daring a transgression?"

"Pardon me, most potent Cañeri," humbly replied Malique. "Pardon the good intentions of a faithful slave;—I am the bearer of pleasing tidings, although in my zeal to serve my master, I may perhaps have been guilty of indiscretion."

"Speak," said Cañeri, assuming a look of important gravity. "Alagraf, remain—I may need thy counsel—let the rest withdraw."

"Most mighty Cañeri," continued Malique; "as my party was patrolling the mountains last night, some of my men surprised a Christian."

"And of course he met his death?" interrupted the Chief.

"He did, after a long struggle, for a more desperate man we have seldom seen! he now dangles on a tree, like many others of his countrymen, a fit scarecrow to rambling adventurers."

"Proceed—" said Cañeri gravely.

"A moment after," resumed Malique, "chance led us to the spot where another Christian slept in fancied security."

"And didst thou slay the wretch?" inquired the Chief.

"No, most noble Cañeri. It was a female, and therefore I brought her here, for she is a most bewitching creature—such as seldom meets the enamoured gaze of an enraptured lover. The rose in its opening bloom looks not more lovely in the garden of the faithful, than this beauteous captive. Indeed the fascination of her person is peculiarly striking, though at present the gloom that preys upon her mind, tends considerably to diminish the lustre of her charms. Still I thought she might find favor in the sight of our illustrious Chief, and be honored with his smile."

"A young Christian maiden," cried Cañeri, "sleeping in the Alpujarras!—'tis strange!—how came she there? Malique, didst thou learn? Knowest thou the nature of her sorrows?"

"Yes," answered Malique,—“she bitterly

deplores the fate of him we slew. Apparently, he was a husband or a lover. At all events the Christian people cannot boast of a nobler or braver warrior."

"Knowest thou his name?" demanded Cañeri.

"I learnt it," replied Malique, "from the captive herself;—it is Don Lope Gomez Arias."

"Gomez Arias!" exclaimed the renegade, starting back in amazement. "Gomez Arias! it cannot be!"

"Such is the name," returned Malique, "that our prisoner gave him, and there is no reason why she should deceive us. In truth her anguish was too deep, and her grief but too lively, to leave a doubt of the veracity of her statement."

"Gomez Arias!" cried again the renegade, "and is he really dead!—dead! Malique, art thou sure?—did he not escape?"

"Escape!" muttered the Moor, "his soul escaped from his body. That is all the escape that I wot of."



"Then," continued the renegade, Bermudo, striking his forehead in a paroxysm of disappointed passion, "my revenge is foiled, my victory incomplete. I, too, could once have taken his life; but he owed me more than his base life could pay. Long have I toiled to bring about a day of retribution, and now my hopes are suddenly crushed, and my vengeance wrested from my hand."

"What means this, Alagraf?" inquired Cañeri, surprised at such uncommon demonstrations.

"Is this thy acute perception!" cried Bermudo, "that thou canst not divine the motive that alone brings joy or pain to this blighted heart? Dost thou forget that there is only one solitary feeling that can affect it?"

"Yes, revenge!" replied Cañeri, "but then this Christian! this Gomez Arias—"

"Is my accursed enemy," thundered the renegade; "my foul wronger; once my lord and master; and this captive, this weeping beauty, is perchance his affianced bride, the proud daughter of our bitterest, our redoubt-

able foe. Yes, she must be the daughter of Alonso de Aguilar. And yet," he added, pondering, "how came she there?"

"What sayest thou?" exclaimed Cañeri, with strong marks of pleasure. "Can it be possible? Thanks, thanks to the holy prophet that vouchsafes such reward to the faithful. This is indeed a most precious gage, as it may perhaps be the means of curbing the overbearing insolence of Aguilar; for, destitute as he is of all sympathy towards the Moors, he may yet feel the anxiety of parental love when he learns the situation of his child. Dispatch, quick; Malique, bring forth thy captive, and ask a meed—'tis granted."

Malique withdrew, leaving the chief reveling in delight at the unexpected tidings; and the renegade, with a countenance expressive of deep regret at an occurrence which deprived him of the enjoyment of the one dark passion that actuated his every feeling, and engrossed every thought.

Meantime, the unfortunate Theodora was conducted by Malique before the chief, like a trembling victim for the sacrifice.

"Behold my prize," said the obsequious Moor, pointing to the helpless girl. "I hope it is deserving the acceptance of the illustrious Cañeri."

The gratified Moor made a slight inclination with his head in token of approval, and then in the most scrutinizing manner proceeded to scan the beauties of the afflicted fair, who hung down her head in sorrow and confusion. The renegade made a movement of disappointment, when he perceived that the captive was not, as he had surmised, the daughter of Aguilar.

"What!" said Cañeri, observing his surprise, "does she not merit thy approbation? Methinks, Alagraf, thou hast no soul for beauty: look, look at that lovely countenance; it is certainly bathed in grief, and defaced with weeping; but that does not detract from its charm."

"Fair Christian," he added, in a condescending tone, "droop not thus like the humble and neglected flower of the valley, since thou art called to a brighter destiny; thou shalt

flourish like the cultured lily of the garden, for thou hast found grace in the eyes of Cañeri, and he has the power to render thee happy."

These words of kindness, far from tranquilizing the mind of Theodora, served but to increase its agitation.

She hastily shrunk back as she perceived the Moor make a motion to take her hand. Malique, in the meantime, exhibited much satisfaction in having thus rendered himself useful to the pleasures of Cañeri, and thus acquired indisputable claims to his notice and gratitude; for, with the petty despot, as with the greater tyrants of whom he was the miserable copy, the base ministrants to his private gratifications were generally more abundantly remunerated than those who gloriously served their country.

"Malique," exclaimed Cañeri, his eyes glowing with joy, "I am so well pleased with thy zeal, that I will assuredly enable thee to hold the most confidential offices near my person."

Then, turning to the renegade, who was as stubborn in his silence as the chief appeared eager in lauding the attractions of the captive, "Curse upon such apathy, Alagraf," he said with affected glee, "thou art a man of marble, if such a woman is not capable of moving thee."

"Yes," sternly responded the renegade, "I am in sooth a man of marble, and pity there are so few to resemble me: better it were for the prosperity of our enterprize. What have I to do with the charms of woman? they have proved the bane of my existence. Once, indeed, I knew their value, but that is past, and now they are hateful to my sight: they recal the unfortunate and innocent cause of the horrors which surround me. Moor," he then added, "abandon not thyself to such unreasonable joy; for, learn that the hopes which we conceived from the possession of our captive are already vanished. She is not the woman we had supposed."

"What meanest thou?" asked Cañeri.

"She is not the daughter of Aguilar," replied Bermudo.

“ Well,” rejoined the Moor, “ we must then submit to the disappointment; but will this circumstance detract from the charms which you see render her so lovely ?” He cast an enamoured glance, as he delivered these words, on the subject of his present delight; and then, very well satisfied with his discretion, he continued—“ I can justly appreciate merit wherever I find it; and although certainly the creed and country of our fair guest are in direct opposition with mine, yet that shall not prevent me from paying the tribute which her beauty so justly deserves.”

Theodora heard all this with sorrowful resignation; nor was Cañeri by any means satisfied with the success of his eloquence, for he had been accustomed to meet with a more joyous reception from every female to whom he had yet condescended to make advances.

“ Malique,” he said, turning to the officious menial, “ lead this beauteous damsel to one of our best apartments, and see that she wants for nothing that I can command.”

He then favored the afflicted Theodora

with a peculiar smile, in which, somewhat of the ludicrous prevailed over the tender, and dismissed her from his presence, with a gracious promise of a visit as early as the importance of his affairs would allow.

While Cañeri spoke, Bermudo held his accustomed silence, but he could not disguise his contempt when he perceived the Moor so completely engrossed with the pursuit of his selfish gratification, at a time when affairs of such magnitude were at stake.

"Cañeri," he cried sullenly; "it appears to me that our cause is not likely to derive any great advantage from the possession of that Christian."

"A mind," replied Cañeri, with an assumption of gravity, "a mind harassed with numerous cares, necessarily requires some relaxation.—To thee alone, as a friend, do I speak in these terms of confidence; to any other, I would not condescend to afford the shadow of explanation regarding what may appear strange in my conduct; my actions

must not be subjected to the scrutiny of any one."

As he said this, he looked around with an air of offended dignity, as though a signification of his will were sufficient to command respect and obedience; while the renegade made no other reply than a smile of derision.

Cañeri now summoned around him his principal officers, and happy in the beggarly retinue that attended him, he paraded the wretched town of Alhacen, the capital of his scanty dominions. This was more for idle display, than for the purpose of taking vigorous and efficient measures to check the course of the Christians. The garrison was drawn out in the *Plaza*\* to be reviewed by their commander. They amounted to about eight hundred men, but exhibited a miserable appearance, both with regard to arms and equipment. He harangued them upon the glory of their cause, and exhorted the chiefs to a rigid observance of their duty. Having thus terminated this singular exhibition to

\* The square.



his entire satisfaction, he returned with the same parade to his humble mansion, which, in compliment to its illustrious inhabitant, was now dignified with the title of the palace.

## CHAPTER II.

Mais puisque je naquis, sans doute il falloit naître ;  
Si l'on m'eut consulté, j'aurais refusé l'être.  
Vains regrets ! Le destin me condamnoit au jour,  
Et je viens, o soleil ! te maudire à mon tour.

*Lamartine.*

I have no dread,  
And feel the curse to have no natural fear  
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes  
Or lurking love of something on the earth.

*Lord Byron.*

RETURNED to his dwelling, Cañeri seated himself to his repast, which, though frugal in the extreme, was nevertheless served with all the etiquette of a sovereign. The taciturnity of the renegade was if possible more marked than ever, nor could he be prevailed upon to partake of the food which was before them. Cañeri felt an invincible desire to

dive into the mysterious history of his confidant; an attempt which he had already frequently made, but always unattended with success. As soon, therefore, as their meal was finished, he dismissed the attendants, and turning to the renegade in the most friendly manner—

“Alagraf,” he said, “cheer up; let not thy noble spirit droop: think on our cause, and rouse thy energies in proportion to the danger which surrounds us.”

“Danger!” cried the renegade, “talk not to me of danger—I am reckless *now* of consequences;—what is the whole world to me? My hated, my detested enemy is no more;—the only longing of my life is thwarted, and I can feel no longer any interest in the pursuits of man.”

“Surely!” exclaimed Cañeri, somewhat alarmed, “thou dost not mean to abandon our cause!”

“Moor!” replied the renegade, in a voice of thunder, his eyes flashing, and his brows assuming an additional sternness—“Moor!

is it to me thou darest hold such language ? Thinkest thou that being *once* a traitor, my whole existence must be made up of treasons ? Suspicious man, know me better ; I am a dark and accursed villain ; hateful alike to Christian and Moor, but yet I am no deluded wretch, that will stoop to swerve from the path he has once resolved to follow."

"Calm thy temper, Alagraf," said Cañeri, interposing ; "I meant not to offend thee, and if I have, I pray thy indulgence : thou art sensible of the friendship which unites us ; it is from the zeal of that friendship, that I continually urge the questions which thou seemest to avoid. Great must be the nature of thy sufferings, and powerful the motive which provokes such unusual signs of emotion ; yet surely some consolation might be found in trusting thy secret to the bosom of a comrade."

The renegade remained silent for a few minutes ; then, as if suddenly adopting a fresh resolution—

"Cañeri," he said, "oft has thine officious

zeal, or weak curiosity, fatigued my ears with repeated questions that are daggers to my soul. I will now satisfy thy craving; yes, I will unravel the mystery that hangs around my head. By this concession I may perhaps acquire the right to brood over my wrongs and misfortunes undisturbed and unmolested in future.

“Cañeri,” he continued, “all the calamity which is now the portion of the man that stands before thee—all the struggles, the racking throes that torture this seared breast, arise from one solitary cause—the offspring of one crime, and of that crime the unhappy victim who suffers by it is innocent. The rites of religion never blessed my mother’s bridal bed, and I was born a thing despised, looked down upon by the proud ones of the land, pointed at by the urchins, and even taunted by the beggar as he went his rounds. But nature, that made me a thing to be contemned, gave me no feelings congenial to such a state. I was endowed with sentiments more noble; and

greater powers of mind than those who affected to spurn me. I know not my father, nor was I ever anxious to learn a name to me so full of misery, and which could claim no other token from his child than a malediction. This much I learnt—that my parent was a nobleman; but what unnatural cruelty could induce him to abandon his offspring, I never was able to determine. I was brought up a retainer in the house of the sire of my bitter foe, Don Lope Gomez Arias, where I was subjected to indignities at which my proud nature revolted, whilst the obscurity of my birth powerfully contributed to exasperate those feelings already too much excited by repeated contumelies and scorn. Wherever I turned my eyes I discovered a dreary waste in the midst of society; for I was an outcast, and I felt no sympathy with the uses of the world. Chance made me a wretch, and nature unkindly gave me feelings and sentiments to heighten the misery to which my existence was doomed. Alas! my dark and repulsive exterior gave an additional motive

to justify the dislike with which I was generally beheld.

“Such a life,” interrupted Cañeri, “must have been insupportable.”

“It might,” nobly answered the renegade, “to a weak mind—not to mine, for the very injustice of my fate gave me courage to support it. I rose superior to my misfortunes, and nourished a sensation of mixed hatred and contempt towards my kind: I assiduously nurtured sentiments calculated to make me believe myself independent in the bosom of slavery and degradation.—Yes, I had a beam of cheering hope, a wild and romantic emulation, a noble ambition, to acquire by my own deeds, my daring exertion, that which was denied me by the combined oppositions of birth and station. My pretensions were supported by my pride, and spread a solitary but brilliant light amidst the darkness with which my existence was clouded. In these sentiments I grew, hated and abhorring, despising and contemned. The springs of my heart, which would have sympathised with human nature,

seemed to have been dried up for ever. I found myself incapable of any kindly feeling, and my whole being was wrapped in that dismal and isolated gloom which, like the mephitic vapour, tended to paralyze the exertions and blight the fair prospects of life. Alas! I was mistaken; for, to my misfortune, I eventually discovered that I was a man, subject to the weakness of human nature, that the depths of my heart, which I had judged impenetrable to the influence of the softer passions, were soon to be deeply stirred, and that I was fated to experience those sentiments which I had proudly imagined to be foreign to my nature.

“Amongst the numberless beings who conspired to render me wretched—amongst the many whom I was forced to look upon more as natural foes than fellow-creatures, there was one who first beheld me with a genuine and heavenly feeling of compassion, and from that sweet and pure emanation of sensibility soon sprung the most tender and devoted attachment. This being, generous



and kind, this solitary exception to the overwhelming mass of hatred that encompassed me, for whose dear sake alone I might forgive my parents for the miserable life they bestowed upon me—this being was a woman—a woman, alas! for our mutual woe! She was as abundant in personal attractions as she was rich in mental beauty. She loved, aye! she devotedly loved the unhappy Bermudo, the wretched outcast, from whom every one else recoiled. She loved him, and she found in that dark form, in that being so degraded and despised, a heart capable of feeling and estimating a genuine passion. Yes, in this desolate wilderness of my heart, not all was then barren, and the kindly feelings sowed by her hand took root and budded forth; I fostered them, and they flourished as vigorously as if they had been cast in a more generous mould. I loved her! Oh, Anselma! Five years have passed since that dreadful moment, but yet the bloody scene is glowing, burning in my memory. I see thy mangled form, thy beauteous limbs broken, and thy

---

long dishevelled hair clotted with gore. Anselma! Anselma! I did not follow thee to thy untimely grave, for I had to plan and accomplish the deed of vengeance.—I cannot weep: the sad fountains of these eyes are long since dry, but my scorched heart still weeps with tears of blood, when the scenes of thy youth, thy love, and thy horrid fate crowd upon my agonized recollection.”

The renegade could not proceed; his agitation became terrible, and all the occurrences of his past life were busy in distorting those features and adding to their natural ferocity. Cañeri looked aghast, for his frivolous soul could not easily comprehend the nature of an attachment so fervent, so deeply rooted, as to produce the violent effects which he now witnessed. But his wonder increased as he perceived that gust of uncontrollable passion gradually subside and give place to a kinder emotion than he thought congenial to the being that stood before him. The renegade was again calm. A tear stood trembling in his eye,

and that pitying drop spoke of affections long subdued, but not entirely extinct in the breast of him who had but few tears to bestow. Soon, however, his glassy eyes were fixed, and as Bermudo raised mechanically his long sinewy fingers to his burning forehead, his countenance became the index of a mind engaged in scenes far away. It was a deep though momentary abstraction, for as Cañeri gazed in amazement, the renegade awoke from his trance, and became aware of the notice which his emotion had excited. He felt ashamed that a token of weakness should have betrayed him before man, and with a strong exertion strove to smother the commotion which swelled his breast. He dashed away the drop that fain would soften the lurid expression of his eye. His pride succeeded in the conflict: soon that lip recovered its sardonic curl, and his features relapsing into their calm and gloomy ferocity, he then proceeded—

“Gomez Arias, upon whom nature had lavished her choicest gifts, only as the means of

following with greater success his licentious courses—Gomez Arias saw the beautiful Anselma. Her attractions and innocence could not escape his observation, and he marked her out for his prey. Curse the day his wily smile first lighted on the unfortunate girl!”

“She did not then,” interrupted Cañeri, “fall into the snare of the seducer?”

“No,” firmly replied the renegade, “she did not; but the gentle creature knew too well how boundless was the power of her persecutor, and trembled to provoke its influence—not for her own sake, but for mine. Our mutual inclination was no longer a secret; and my presumption in crossing the will of my arrogant master, would have been attended with inevitable ruin. Anselma, sensible of our dangerous position, carefully endeavoured to avoid the threatened storm. It was all in vain; her tears fell fast, and her prayers were uttered in all the fervour of desolate grief; but the barbarian saw those tears unmoved, and heard her piteous expostulations with the coldness of a villain. Nay, he felt exasperated at the resistance with which his wishes

were opposed by one whom his pride naturally led him to consider as affording an easy conquest. He had been accustomed, in his shameful career, to meet with little or no opposition; he was base enough to doubt the very existence of female virtue; and was it for a poor humble girl, born his dependant, an orphan from her childhood, and clinging to no other protection than that which could be afforded by such a thing as I, to contradict the vile opinion which the proud patrician entertained?

“Cañeri, I will no longer dwell on this subject. Gomez Arias at length resolved to accomplish by a vile contrivance, what he could not obtain by seductive persuasion. I was despatched on a trifling commission to one of his estates, my presence being an obstacle to his designs; for poor and despised as I was, Gomez Arias nevertheless looked upon me with a feeling of dread. He could crush the reptile, but he feared the sting. I was strong in my very weakness, for as I had but

one solitary motive to link me to life; that being removed, my oppressor felt aware my life would then only serve as the price by which I was to purchase revenge.

“I was absent, when one of his miscreants administered some deleterious beverage to the unsuspecting Anselma, the effects of which answered to their utmost extent the wishes of the libertine. An irresistible lethargy oppressed the senses and rendered powerless the limbs of the helpless victim. In that state she was borne to the couch of her undoer, and by a stratagem worthy of the monster by whom it was invented, Gomez Arias triumphed over her passive unconscious form. Happy, happy if the unnatural slumber in which Anselma was immersed, had subsided into the sleep of death. But no, she awoke—she returned to life, only to curse that life which was now covered with degradation. Alas! she had no one to whom she could fly, and under whose fostering kindness she might hide her shame; she had no refuge left—none but death, the

last shelter of virtuous woman betrayed. She spurned with indignant pride the glittering offers of the miscreant who wrought her ruin. She recoiled with abhorrence from his loathsome caresses; cursed in bitter agony his unmanly deed, and brooded over her misfortune, until the loss of her reason followed the profanation of her person."

Again the renegade stopt in his recital, as if unable to sustain the painful recollection, and after a pause he continued :—

"Evening was falling as I returned from my distant mission. My heart felt unusually heavy and desponding; as I was passing near a precipice in these very mountains, my ear was struck with the hum of voices, mingled with the discordant shrieks of birds of prey which issued from the abyss below. Presently a flight of those ominous birds came screaming on high, as if scared by some unwelcome intruders, and the hum of voices was converted into a long, piercing, and promiscuous lamentation. With as much activity as the perilous nature of that precipice would per-

mit, I hastened towards the spot, and soon perceived the melancholy cause of the wailings that had arrested my course. Some peasants were with difficulty dragging from that frightful abyss a burthen, which, as well as I could distinguish from the distance, appeared a human body. I approached nearer, and found that it was in reality a human—a mangled corpse!—It was that of my Anselma!”

“ Oh, horror !” exclaimed Cañeri, in chilled amazement.

“ It was Anselma,” gloomily repeated Bermudo ; “ my love, my only happiness in this accursed world. She had already been dead sometime. Her slender garments were rent, her long tresses torn and stained with blood, and her delicate limbs broken and mangled with the fall. Alas ! her beautiful features were now scarcely discernible ; the raven had plucked at those eyes that once beamed with affection, and the hungry vulture had lacerated the pure heart, that hallowed shrine of innocence and love and virtue. I did not

•



weep, nor did I utter a single groan ; no sign of grief escaped me. No,—the springs of my heart were instantaneously frozen, and with horrified stupor I gazed on the ghastly spectacle. Suddenly my whole frame underwent a revolution. I felt a dreadful pressure on my heart,—a ball of fire seemed rolling in my brain. It was torture intense ; the pangs of frenzied agony came over me, and for a time I knew not what I did ; but the tempest of passion gradually subsided, and my soul became fixed in that settled and sombre mood, which has been to me as a second nature since that dreadful event.

“ The sad remains of the lovely Anselma were consigned to the kindred earth, and I hastened to learn the cause of the appalling fate, which my boding heart already but too faithfully foretold. I hurried to the mansion of Gomez Arias ; the truth was soon revealed, but I felt no surprise—I was prepared for the dire intelligence. I reproached Gomez Arias in the most bitter and provoking terms ; he answered me with the laugh of contempt. I

laid my hand on my sword—he smote me on the face. Furiously I drew the mortal weapon, but was soon overpowered and disarmed by the numerous attendants of my foe. I applied for redress—for justice. I denounced my enemy as the murderer of Anselma. It was all in vain; justice affected to be deaf to my earnest and reiterated appeal. Alas! what redress could I obtain against so powerful an enemy? His constant good fortune had raised him in the estimation of the court; he was brave, victorious in various encounters against the Moors in the war of Granada. His services were rewarded; his crimes overlooked; and I with the sting of shame and revenge and disappointment rankling in my heart, determined to extort with my own hands that redress which the justice of my country had denied me. I made a world to myself in the solitude of my now desolate feelings. Severed from every pursuit, a stranger to every natural tie, I resolved to dedicate all the resources of my soul to the prosecution of the most exemplary re-

venge. Ever since that time, I have, under the cover of various disguises, hovered about his path, and I had once an opportunity of partly satiating my thirst of revenge; but I let it pass, because the draught would not half satisfy my fevered longing for deeper retribution. It was in the embrace of a deep slumber that I once saw Gomez Arias, and I hovered over his devoted head with the pleasure of the vulture that sees beneath him its defenceless prey."

"And why didst thou not slay him?" inquired Cañeri.

"No!" replied the renegade, "I would not kill him then, for that were no revenge; his soul would flee from this world without the knowledge that it was *I*—it was Bermudo that inflicted the wound. I did not kill him; I reserved his hated life for more exquisite tortures—a more appalling fate, with all the harrowing attendants of remorse and despair."

"And what probability was there afterwards," demanded the Moor, "of prosecuting your intentions with success?"

“That,” returned the renegade, “was the constant object of my meditation ; but alas ! the whole study of my existence is now rendered useless by the unexpected death of my enemy. However, I joined your cause from hatred to the injustice of my countrymen. That hatred still burns, and I will yet find means for vengeance in the detested blood of Christians. Moor,” he then added, with sternness, “I am sunk low, low in the depths of crime, and this is thy best security for my constancy to the desperate course I have adopted. My life is solitary and independent, reckless of all results. Lead then to the combat, and where slaughter stains the way, and where shrieks and groans encumber the air, where death is busiest, there ! thou mayest exultingly cry, there is the renegade !”

As Alagraf delivered these words, he suddenly withdrew, leaving the Moor plunged in astonishment. Cañeri, however, was soon aroused from his train of reflection by a consciousness of the importance of his station. He prudently judged that too much of his

valuable time had already been devoted to a matter of individual interest. He started therefore from his couch, summoned his various officers, and inquired with minute accuracy into the state of every thing in the palace. Satisfactory answers were returned, and the chief received the communications with a demeanor appropriately grave and dignified. He next paraded the town with a display of importance that might well have amused his followers, if indeed they had been capable of feeling anything but concern in their destitute situation.

Again Cañeri returned to his dwelling, and a discussion was entered into with respect to the several articles that composed his dress: his faded turban was retrimmed; his couch arranged with the greatest care, and odorous shrubs burnt in the apartment which he honoured with his presence. The duties of the day having been happily completed, the chief resigned himself to his habitual indolence with all the complacency of one who considers himself by situation entitled to the contribu-

tion of every one towards his comfort and luxury.

At the close of evening, however, his repose was disturbed by a messenger who arrived from El Feri de Benastepar, announcing that the redoubtable Don Alonso de Aguilar was rapidly advancing, and that they should shortly be obliged to join in combat. He implored Cañeri to be ready for any disaster that might occur, and to keep his men prepared for all contingencies. This intelligence, as it may be well conceived, threw the Moor into some degree of agitation, and being rather late, he resolved to call into requisition the multifarious powers he possessed of serving his country. He speedily summoned a cabinet council, whose opinions he would condescend to hear, and whose understandings he graciously intended to enlighten. He pompously reclined himself on the cushions, and assembling his courtly retinue, commenced his harangue respecting the plans necessary to be adopted under existing circumstances. His councillors, however, appeared in a very

sorry plight to give advice: they looked at each other with woe-begone countenances, and their sleepy eyes seemed to concur in one opinion, though they did not actually venture to give it utterance, that the most rational course to pursue, after the fatigues of the day, was to indulge nature with a few hours of refreshing repose. Indeed the judicious and salutary tendency of this measure appeared to meet with such unanimous assent, that after sitting half an hour, both the president and the sapient members of the council very leisurely fell asleep, and thereby testified their opinion, like sensible men, as to the most rational way of terminating a council of state.

The renegade, disturbed in the meditations into which he had fallen during the empty oration of Cañeri, by the sonorous and unequivocal signs of slumber evinced by his colleagues, saw with surprise the conclusion to which they had unanimously arrived, and casting a look of contempt on the sleeping councillors, retired to his quarters.

## CHAPTER III.

I te, caldi sospiri, al freddo core ;  
Rompete il ghiaccio che pietà contende ;  
E, se prego mortal al ciel s'intende,  
Morte, o mercè sia fine al mio dolore.

*Petrarca.*

He has I know not what  
Of greatness in his looks, and of high fate,  
That almost awes me.

*Dryden.*

MEANTIME the unfortunate Theodora had spent the day in a continual succession of sorrows. She had been conducted to another apartment, somewhat in better order, where she had been pressed in vain to partake of some food which Marien Rufa with friendly officiousness presented to her. Sad recollections of her past misfortunes left not an interval of repose, and her interview with Cañeri had awakened in her mind a lively



sense of danger and alarm. Slowly, therefore, and painfully the hours wore away. She had no alleviation to her distress. The words of comfort which the hag vainly attempted to administer, would have failed to sooth, even from the lips of sympathising friends, much more when surrounded by the avowed and ferocious enemies of her country.

This melancholy day was succeeded by a night still more dreary; for although worn out with fatigue and suffering, Theodora could find no respite in the sweet oblivion of sleep. Alas! the feverish slumber that stole upon her at intervals, was fraught with all the terrors that her present situation could suggest. The phantoms of night in rapid succession pressed upon her bewildered imagination: she saw her venerable father borne down under the pressure of grief, wringing his withered hands in agony, and pronouncing a direful malediction on his ungrateful child. She heard that thrilling voice, broken by age, and quivering with emotion, and on his countenance she beheld

the workings of despair. Fitfully she awoke, and struggled hard to chase away the heart-rending vision, and then she sunk again to meet another still more frightful. The wind whistled gloomily through the forest trees; the wild bird screamed his death song; and a spectre rose with sunken eyes and squalid cheek, his wounds distilling blood, and his raven locks clotted with gore. It was her lover—he had left the tree on which he withered like the seared leaf of autumn, and stalked to her widowed couch smiling sadly in death,—she shrieked aloud—the phantom fled, and again in terror she awoke.

Dreams such as these haunted her imagination during the long night. Nor could the cheering rays of the morn impart consolation to her desponding bosom. She heard the mingling voices of nature's simple minstrels hail in grateful chorus the approach of day, and she listened to the various sounds of busy humanity, rising from the drowsiness of repose to life and activity. But her feelings could no longer sympathise with the pursuits

of this world. The appalling images which her feverish fancy had conjured up still pursued her, and if these unwelcome guests left her a momentary repose, they were succeeded by others no less chilling to the soul. The heavy measure of her sorrows was yet to be increased by the anticipation of future evils— evils worse than the terrors of slavery or death, for she was in hourly danger of encountering the bitter pangs of shame and degradation.

Cañeri had been inspired by her beauty with a violent but licentious passion, which he had it in his power at that moment to gratify, and this idea agitated the wretched Theodora with the most dismal apprehensions. While she sat pondering on her disastrous fate, and vainly devising means to avert its danger, she was surprised by the entrance of Marien Rufa.

“A good morrow, sweet lady,” said the crone; “well, this is a pretty comfortable chamber:—you must have slept soundly.”

A deep sigh was the only answer she could elicit from Theodora.

"At all events," continued Marien Rufa, "you must leave off sighing and weeping, for sure enough you can derive no good thereby. Besides, it is meet your countenance should assume a more cheerful expression, since you are soon to be honored with a visit from the magnificent Cañeri. He has been forcibly struck with your charms, and has signified his intentions of coming shortly to pay his devoirs in person. So I am here before-hand to bid you prepare for the illustrious visitor."

The heart of Theodora died within her, as the hag announced this dreaded intelligence, for though we may fancy ourselves prepared to meet a danger with which we are hourly threatened, yet its immediate approach rarely fails to cause an additional pang.

Theodora was cruelly alive to the helplessness of her situation. She cast a hurried

glance around, but could find no signs of comfort; yet she fixed her last hopes on Marien Rufa, this decayed piece of blanched mortality, like the drowning wretch who snatches at a withered branch, though conscious of the frail support to which he clings.

From the little previous intercourse with Marien Rufa, Theodora had discovered that her disposition was not altogether so inhuman as her exterior naturally seemed to indicate. Though a renegade, she did not appear completely divested of compassion towards those to whom she had once been endeared by the ties of religion and country; a latent feeling of remorse lurked within her heart, and she did not seem to feel much interest in the affairs of the Moors. These considerations, together with the imminency of her danger, led Theodora to throw herself on the protection of the crone, and beseech her pity and commiseration. But before she could try the effect of her persuasion, the door suddenly swung open, and the dreaded figure of Cañeri presented itself to her sight.

He dismissed his attendants, and waved his hand to Marien Rufa, who slowly retired muttering some half formed inaudible sentences. The door closed, and Theodora shuddered as she found herself alone with the odious and detested Moor.

He approached her mildly, and endeavoured with soothing words to calm her apprehensions.

“Nay, fair Christian,” he said, “thou art too much dejected, nor is thy grief reasonable. The chances of fortune threw thee into my power, and thou art now my slave : this, as well as the circumstance of thy belonging to the race of our accursed enemies, might naturally make thee apprehend but indifferent treatment from the Moor. I might, indeed, have delivered thee to the brutality of my soldiers ; I might have heaped upon thee all the horrors of such a degradation ; but I have taken compassion upon thy youth and beauty (his eyes glistened with savage joy), and instead of that, thou shalt have the honor of being the partner of my own pleasures.”

---

Theodora covered her face with her hands, and her whole frame shook violently, whilst Cañeri, in an agitated and angry tone, proceeded—

“ This contempt of my generosity may prove prejudicial to thy future fortunes. Many, many are the women amongst the faithful who would feel proud to accept the offers which thou seemest to treat with unbecoming disregard. But trifle not with the benignity of my disposition ; for Cañeri, though an out-cast, and a sovereign only of wild mountains and deserted villages, has yet power enough to enforce his commands, and inflict a summary vengeance upon those who dare thwart his wishes. Remember, then, thou art my slave, and deny me not as a lover what I can easily exact as a master.”

“ I am your slave,” cried Theodora, tremblingly, “ and it is not my intention either to despise your generosity or dispute your power. I am sensible of both—command me the most menial services, I will do all—nay, take my life ; but, oh ! spare me, in mercy

spare me the degradation which you are meditating."

"Degradation!" exclaimed Caneri, rising with rage, "degradation! By the mighty Allah! such temerity is unparalleled! Thy youth and ignorance alone can excuse the criminality of such an expression."

Theodora could only answer by tears. But during the pause which ensued, the mind of Cañeri underwent a sudden revolution; from the highest paroxysm of choler, his features gradually relaxed into complete serenity. This alteration did not proceed from a sense of generosity towards his victim, for he was fully determined to carry his designs into execution; but, like a refined voluptuary, he calculated the advantages he might derive from a timely forbearance. He was, therefore, resolved to exhaust every gentle means before he had recourse to the last extremity.

He now took the hand of Theodora, which she had not the power to withhold, and pressing it tenderly between his own, he renewed his suit with much more suavity of tone and



delicacy of manner. Theodora suffered perhaps more from this unexpected display of kindness, than from the brutal asperity and violence which the Moor had before evinced. For in cases of extreme danger, violence will sometimes inspire a degree of courage, while condescension and urbanity from those who have the power to command is more distressing, inasmuch as it enervates that strong principle of resistance and leaves in its place the weaker and less decisive resource of expostulation.

But by degrees the patience of the amorous Moor was wearing away with the ill-success of his suit, and starting up suddenly, and looking intensely on the afflicted fair, he made a last attempt to conquer her opposition.

Theodora threw herself at his feet, and embracing them eagerly strove to interest his pity by the intensity of her anguish. Her tears fell copiously and her sobs almost impeded her utterance; but this evidence of extreme distress, in lieu of subduing, only tended to kindle more warmly the fierce desires of the Moor. In his hot distempered

veins raged the fever of passion, as he saw that lovely picture of female helplessness prostrate at his feet; her clustering hair floating in loose profusion, and her charms acquiring additional interest from the wild disorder of her situation.

Cañerl glutted his eyes with her beauty, and his whole frame thrilled in a ferment of anticipated raptures. He snatched the fainting Theodora from the ground, almost overpowered with the conflict of her feelings.—As he clasped her in his arms, the unfortunate girl beheld his savage features glistening with joy. She shuddered at their glowing expression, and with a sudden and violent effort burst from his hold.

The heart of the miscreant swelled with indignation and disappointment. He cast a threatening look on the trembling victim, and no longer restrained by any consideration, he again violently seized her.

“Who will protect thee now?” cried the Moor, exultingly.

“Death!” replied Theodora, with the courage of despair.

"Death!" retorted Cañeri, with a mocking laugh; "Death! Surely thou must fancy that I am to be intimidated by the ravings of a woman. No, thou canst not die, even if that were truly thy desire. Thou *shalt* not die, at least till I think thee no longer worthy of contributing to my joys." Theodora clasped her hands in agony; her fate appeared now inevitable. Her unmanly enemy furiously mastered her remaining efforts; her feeble struggles were almost overpowered, and as her senses were about to forsake her, she wildly shrieked aloud for help. At this moment a noise was heard at the entrance of the room; the door, as if by a tremendous exertion of strength, was wrenched from its hinges, and a tall mysterious figure stalked into the apartment and stood motionless with amazement. Theodora uttered a scream of joy at this timely deliverance, while the enraged and disappointed Moor turned fiercely round to ascertain who had the temerity to venture upon such an intrusion.

The towering figure that stood before him seemed a stranger to his eyes. He was enveloped in a long and ample Spanish cloak, and his countenance was almost hidden by a dark clustering feather that fell from his slouched hat.

Cañeri shook with ire.

"What treason is this?" he exclaimed. "A cursed Christian in my very dwelling. Ma-ligue! Alagraf! Where are ye, villains? Guards! Seize the wretch, seize him, and drag him to death!"

"Stay!" cried the stranger, in a voice of thunder; "stay! ere thou dardest to offer the least violence to me—nay, advance but one foot, and I'll strike thee to the earth."

Cañeri was awed by the noble and fearless manner of the stranger.

"A Christian!" he continued, in a more subdued voice, "and dardest thou in my very dominions to utter such vaunting threats? Dost thou forget that these are the Alpujarras, and that I am Cañeri?"

“ I am no Christian,” replied the stranger :  
“ a Moor, a true Moor am I, but one who  
blushes to count Cañeri amongst his asso-  
ciates.”

“ Speak !” cried Cañeri, bewildered,  
“ Speak ! what mystery is this ? Who then  
art thou ?”

“ Know me, then,” returned the other, and  
throwing aside his disguise, discovered a man  
of tall stature and athletic proportions. On  
his dark bronzed countenance there was  
an expression of bold defiance and cool reso-  
lution ; his eyes were lighted up with the fire  
of noble courage, and although no tender  
feeling could be detected in his stern features,  
yet they were not altogether devoid of gene-  
rosity. He was a model of mountain beauty,  
wild, majestic, and free from artful decora-  
tion. A simple Moorish tunic, which the most  
humble of his followers might wear, covered  
his manly figure, and the only mark of dis-  
tinction by which his dignity could be recog-  
nized was a scarf of green, the sacred colour,  
and a large buckler on which was portrayed a  
noble lion, surmounted by the Arabic motto, <sup>(1)</sup>

---

*Edem pasban dervish est aslan.\**

Cañeri gazed in astonishment, and almost bereft of the powers of utterance could only exclaim—

“El Feri!”

“Yes!” answered he. “El Feri de Benastepar arrives in time to witness the honorable occupation of his colleague in command, whilst our brave companions remain unburied and rotting on these wild solitudes, and the proud Christian pursues us like the hungry tiger, giving us not a moment’s repose; whilst our forces have been routed and slaughtered by the victorious Alonso de Aguilar, and the few that have escaped his murderous sword, in conjunction with El Feri, are compelled to seek for safety in disguise and flight; I thought we should meet with succour and assistance in the mountain home of Cañeri—and how do I meet him? Not ready in arms to cover our retreat; not laudably occupied in providing resources for our dispirited soldiers, but meanly courting the blandishments of a Christian slave.

\* The brave man who protects the helpless is a Lion.

Weak and forlorn and despairing, my few brave comrades are stretched on yonder street, fainting through want, and worn out with fatigue. I call upon Cañeri for help, and I find that the power which was intrusted to him for our mutual defence is basely employed, not against the common enemy, but a feeble defenceless female! Shame, Moor! shame! But that I reverence the public voice that named thee chief, and that I desire not to arrogate to myself a retributive justice, I myself would wrench from thee that command which thou shamest, and entrust it to the hands of men more worthy."

Cañeri remained some time speechless and abashed. Amazement, confusion and terror alternately occupied his distracted mind; the taunts and rebukes which El Feri had so lavishly bestowed, roused his anger almost to madness. His heart boiled in a frenzied ebullition to which he durst not give utterance, for he well knew that he himself would be the first victim of its explosion. Convulsed with rage at the imagined insult, he seemed

---

ready to dart upon the arrogant censor of his actions, but the tremendous power of his fellow-chief suddenly paralyzed his arm. It was the fierce mastiff burning to rush upon the terrible bull, yet restrained by the conscious superiority of the noble animal.

Twice the hand of Cañeri was involuntarily directed towards his dagger, and twice some sudden recollection seemed to arrest its progress. And then he strove to conceal the incautious movement from the eagle eye of El Feri; but the inward workings of his soul were easily detected by the keen penetration of that chief. He stood unmoved, and whilst a sardonic smile curled his lip, he said in a voice of dreadful import—

“Cañeri, thou darest not. I see thy dastardly intention, but thou hast not the boldness to practise what thy heart has the baseness to dictate:—another such a movement, and thou liest a corpse at my feet.”

As he uttered these last words, his brow was darkened, and his eye flashed with indignation. Cañeri, if somewhat deficient in

---



the manly virtues of a warrior, was amply compensated by the crafty dexterity of a dissembler, and he now perceived the policy of hailing as a friend the man whom he dared not defy as an enemy: he therefore with a mighty exertion stifled his emotion, and his whole appearance became calm and composed. Indeed an expression of mixed repentance and candour varnished his wily and tortuous features, as he proceeded to greet El Feri with words of amity and companionship.

“Forgive,” he said, “the unwary ebullition of transient displeasure. Thou knowest the sincerity of my sentiments towards El Feri. But, were these even to be doubted, the welfare of the Moorish cause imperiously requires the sacrifice of all private resentment amongst its chiefs.”

“Yes,” returned El Feri, “the welfare of the Moorish cause requires union and amity between the chiefs, but these are not the only virtues necessary to render it successful.”

He uttered these words in a significant

tone, which could not be misconstrued, but to which Cañeri pretended not to give any interpretation.

"Is then our danger so imminent?" he inquired.

"This very day," replied El Feri, sadly, "this very day perhaps our fate will be decided. The victorious army of Aguilar is rapidly advancing against us. We have been completely routed at Gergal, by forces superior in number and discipline, and the few who have escaped the slaughter are indebted for their safety to their knowledge of the mountain passes. We have no time to spare; our men must be instantly put in a state of defence or we shall be surprised unprepared: the hidden situation of this place affords no security, since a traitor Moor is the guide of the Christians; and to his perfidy is chiefly to be ascribed our late discomfiture."

This intelligence threw Cañeri into some confusion, but he soon recovered that coolness and presence of mind which constituted his resources in cases of emergency, and which

made up for his moderate share of personal courage.

"Friend," he cried; "it is enough—let us act."

He was on the point of sallying forth, when he was startled by a confused murmur from without, and presently a Moor rushed in, with all the symptoms of fear and alarm.

"Buzcur, what means this trepidation?" demanded Cañeri.

"The Christians are in sight," replied Buzcur.

"The Christians! The Christians!" echoed a hundred voices.

"Let us haste then, and prepare for our defence," exclaimed El Feri; and he rushed forward without even noticing Theodora, for his thoughts were too much engrossed by the public weal.

Cañeri saw him depart with visible pleasure; for though the danger appeared great, yet he did not lose sight of his expected prey, and casting a fierce look on the affrighted girl, he exclaimed—

"The next time we meet, thou shalt not escape me thus."

Then having with promptness secured all her means of evasion, he hastened to join El Feri de Benastepar and his companions.

The feelings of Theodora at this unexpected event were thrown into the highest excitement. Hope now resumed its sway, though mingled with doubt and fear, for the sudden transition from a state of hopeless despair to that of comparative safety, is ever attended with a misgiving of its reality. Her deliverance from the power of the Moors appeared almost certain; the name of Aguilar was the harbinger of victory; yet the anticipation of her rescue caused so powerful a revulsion of feeling, that Theodora nearly sunk under its pressure. When she had a little recovered, she perceived, however, more clearly, that her destiny was still involved in threatening clouds. The Christians came, but they might be vanquished. The name of Alonso de Aguilar conjured up the brightest hopes, but that of El Feri gave rise to as many fears.

• Thus the heart of the afflicted girl fluctuated between pain and pleasure, when the clangor of trumpets, the tramp of horses, and all the imposing sounds of military preparations, announced to her the speedy arrival of the eventful crisis.

In that awful moment her ideas piously reverted to heaven. She fell prostrate on the ground, and while her countrymen were fast approaching to join in terrific conflict with their enemies, she prayed fervently for the assistance of her God in favor of the Christian arms.

## CHAPTER IV.

Le desordre partout redoublant les alarmes,

\* \* \* \* \*

Les cris que les rochers renvoyaient plus affreux,

Enfin toute l'horreur d'un combat ténébreux ;

Que pouvait la valeur en ce trouble funeste ?

Les uns sont morts, la fuite a sauvé tout le reste.

*Racine.*

Morir famosos ó vencer valientes

Pompa triunfal ó decorosa pira

Solo os aguarda.

*Ercilla.*

GREAT was the confusion into which the Moors were thrown by this sudden alarm : the appearance of El Feri, however, partially succeeded in restoring order amongst the panic-stricken inhabitants, and revived the fainting courage of the soldiers. In a short time, all the Moors capable of bearing arms were ready for defence, whilst the old and infirm, the women and children, busied themselves in collecting their scanty goods,

and placing them securely on their beasts of burthen, as they anticipated the probability of a speedy retreat from their habitations. They evinced no signs of sorrow or reluctance at the prospect of abandoning their homes, for they had been too well enured to the uncertainties of a wandering and predatory life, to betray marks of impatience or anger at an event which necessity had taught them to look upon with indifference.

El Feri, having placed himself at the head of a brave and chosen party, boldly sallied from the town to meet the Christians, hoping that by a courageous effort, he might check their course, and afford time to his associate in command, the better to organise his means of resistance. The Christians advanced gallantly to the attack, shouting their war cry of *Santiago y cierra España*, which was answered by the Moors with the sound of Allah! illah! allah!

Twice the Christians rushed onwards with impetuosity, and twice they were repulsed with equal fierceness and courage. Again

they closed in the conflict, collecting new energies, and exerting their utmost strength. Don Alonso de Aguilar now appeared conspicuous amongst his companions, directing every movement with cool intrepidity, and animating his followers with the example of valorous achievement ; his ponderous sword, reeking with blood, gleamed on high, a beacon of victory ; and death marked his progress as he waded through the field of strife. The numbers and better discipline of the Spaniards, at length began to prevail ; the rebels wavered, and terror soon spread through their ranks. In vain did El Feri exert his utmost powers to rally the discomfited Moors ; in vain did his flashing eye kindle ; in vain did he labour to animate their sinking hearts ; fruitless was the strength of his arm in stemming the torrent that overwhelmed them : his animating voice, as he called to them the remembrance of their country, was lost in the wild confusion which prevailed, and the few that adhered faithful to him, sealed their devotion with their blood.



The rest fled for safety, and El Feri was at length compelled to retreat precipitately into the town.

The Christians paused for a moment in their victorious career. They were about to enter the lion's den; as, from the covert to which the rebels had betaken themselves, they could spread destruction through the ranks of their advancing enemies in comparative security. The Christians were likewise aware that the Moors, although defeated, were not subdued; and they had more to fear from their treacherous ambuscade, than from their courage in open fight.

In the mean time, El Feri succeeded in rallying his scattered forces, and in conjunction with those of Cañeri, prepared for a second encounter: he had, however, taken care to distribute the most expert of his adherents in concealed situations, whence they could more effectually annoy the Christians with their missiles. These hidden foes proved extremely fatal to the Spaniards; blows dealt with security, and from invisible hands, laying

prostrate many of their gallant soldiers. Don Antonio de Leyva had penetrated into the town, with the unrestrained impetuosity of youth, reckless of all danger; but El Feri and Cañeri disputed their ground inch by inch, whilst the renegade, in another quarter, was making dreadful havoc amongst his former fellow-countrymen.

Night had now begun to lour, but the fury of the combatants, instead of abating, seemed to acquire additional power, in proportion as death reduced their numbers. The Moor and the Christian fell, but immediately their places were supplied by others, equally ready to lay down their lives at the shrine of victory or revenge. The town of Alhacen was now become the scene of indiscriminate carnage, and on every side death appeared busy in counting its victims. The Christians, however, advanced slowly, in consequence of the destruction dealt amongst them by the shafts of their concealed adversaries, who had converted every house into a fortress, whence they could with difficulty be dislodged. In order,

therefore, to foil this deadly warfare, they had recourse to a still more terrible expedient: they applied the blazing torch to the inflammable habitations of their enemies; a rising gale seconded their intentions, and the greedy flames spreading widely round, the town was soon enveloped in one promiscuous conflagration. Large volumes of red foggy flame pierced at intervals through the dense columns of smoke that rose in undulating sweep, flinging around a pestilential suffocation; whilst the shrill screams of the women, the cries of the wounded, the despairing shouts of the defenders, the howling of the blast, and the crackling of the raging blaze, united in one wild reverberation, that seemed to strike dismay into the heart of the bravest.

But the frenzied courage of the Moors, instead of yielding, acquired new impetus when they beheld their dwellings a prey to the ravenous flames. Furiously they fought by the light of the conflagration, and as the fitful wind flung high the clouds of smoke,

and the unresisting fire assumed the mastery, you might see by their dark reflection the grim visages of the infuriate foes distended with rage, and each arm with fearful grasp raising the deadly weapon, flashing upon his adversary : then they were all again concealed in the wreathing folds of the impervious fog which closed upon them.

The principal street of the town now presented a ruinous and desolate aspect ; both parties were concentrating their efforts in this spot, and here the combat raged with the greatest violence. Again the blast swept along, bearing before it the masses of black suffocating vapour, but in a clearer interval the eagle glance of Alonso de Aguilar had descried the terrible form of El Feri, now animating his followers, and now darting amongst the foremost of the assailants. He eagerly rushed forward to encounter hand to hand the formidable enemy of the Christians, crying aloud,—

“Turn, rebel Moor ; turn, traitor, and receive thy reward from the sword of Alonso de

Aguilar." El Feri readily obeyed the summons, and springing upon his enemy, with his uplifted weapon he dealt a tremendous blow on the shield of Aguilar and almost clove it asunder. A furious combat ensued, the results of which were soon lost in a huge mass of smoke. But now a wild cry rent the air; it was the death knell of the Moors, that rung prophetic on the blast—hope affrighted fled from their hearts, for El Feri had fallen. The mighty chief drew his stern features into a condensed expression of resolute despair; his face assumed an ashy hue, and his frozen lip curled with an expression of scornful defiance. Dimly but ferociously his eyes were bent on his conqueror, whilst his sinewy hand grasped firmly the weapon it could no longer wield. The gigantic frame of the Moor was convulsed, and his soul struggled fiercely to recover the lost energies of its frame. El Feri had fallen, but even prostrate and defenceless, he seemed still formidable; for even in its ruins, manly strength and noble courage must ever strike the mind with a sensation of awe.

Don Alonso de Aguilar gazed intently on the foe now lying at his feet. A single blow, and his country would be for ever freed from her most redoubted enemy. But Don Alonso beheld that enemy defenceless, and his arm refused to strike, for his heart was too generous to admit at that moment of political considerations: he turned, therefore, and pursued his victorious course against those who were still able to offer resistance.

Meantime Don Antonio de Leyra had succeeded in driving Cañeri out of the town. Before this chief the houseless Moors fled in confusion and dismay. By the gloomy reflection that reddened the sky, a caravan was now seen moving in irregular groups towards the thickest recesses of the mountains. As the fugitives who composed it looked behind, they saw their late dwellings fast reducing to ashes; but alas! they deplored not the sight of their flaming homes, for they who had adopted the wilderness for their country, cared but little on what spot their habitations were fixed. They left behind pledges far more endearing, in whom their loss was irreme-

diable, for amongst the flying throng, there was not one who had not to lament a father, a husband or a son, whose remains were soon to mingle their ashes with those of their dwellings.

Don Alonso de Aguilar soon put to flight the few that still remained, and he pursued his march through streets obstructed at every step with broken armour, masses of the falling houses, or the more distressing impediments of mangled and bleeding bodies. The fire lighted his steps through that scene of horror, and often his unguided tread was answered by a smothered groan from a dying man, who was still sensible of the rude pressure. He saw many a Moor, grim in the last writhings of death, still betraying symptoms of unconquered hatred; and then he stumbled on the bodies of his valiant comrades, some of whom he recognized,—the bravest of his band! For many were the victims about to perish in the flames, and mingle their ashes in that vast ruin, where Moors and Christians, separated by mutual

hate in life, would be finally united in the embrace of death.

Some of the unfortunate wounded mournfully supplicated their comrades that passed over them to terminate their sufferings; and others, who were already deprived of the powers of speech, sent an imploring look of sorrowful import. Aguilar saw the helpless victims he could not assist, and his compassion was strongly excited, as he pressed forward in the pursuit of the flying enemy. Thus he traversed the deserted and perishing town, when he was suddenly arrested by the piercing shrieks of a female in distress.

He paused, and surveying the place, he perceived that they proceeded from a large house to which the devouring flames had already communicated. Don Alonso boldly rushed forward; his pity required no stimulus, but yet it was considerably heightened, when as he approached the building, the cries of affliction were clearly distinguishable in the Spanish tongue. He darted with velocity to the spot, and rushed through the fiery clouds that



enveloped the house. He passed the entrance—traversed the court—reached the stairs—mounted them with the eager alacrity of youth, and guided by the distressing sounds, he at length attained the door of an apartment which was strongly fastened. In an instant it gave way to his powerful strength, when amidst the obscure fog that was fast filling the room, Don Alonso perceived a female form kneeling on the ground, in the attitude of one who had abandoned all hope from mortal assistance.

The noise of the bursting door had called the attention of the unfortunate towards that direction, and when she beheld her deliverer, she uttered a cry of joy, and sprung eagerly into his arms. But the sudden transition from a state of anguish and despair, to that of hope and life, was too much for her to bear. Scarcely had the lovely sufferer contemplated the prospect of a rescue, than overpowered by tumultuous feelings, her energies faltered; the blood forsook its channels to return to its fountain source, and Don Alonso de Aguilar received a lifeless burthen into his arms. The

danger was appalling, for the flames had already enveloped the house, and the undaunted warrior, more apprehensive for the safety of his charge than for his own, hastened to snatch her from the dreadful spot.

Aguilar supported the unconscious female with one arm, whilst with the other he gathered together the light and flowing drapery with which she was attired, lest the inflammable nature of the material might attract the fire. Thus he reached the summit of the stairs. There for a moment he stood aghast, for the wooden steps had already become the prey of the fiery element, and a descent appeared totally impracticable. In this emergency, Don Alonso firmly grasped his lovely burden, and with a promptness of decision and rapidity of execution congenial to his character, he threw himself fearlessly from the place, and clearing the flaming obstruction, alighted on the floor, without sustaining any injury. Dauntless he pierced through the rolling mist; he gained the entrance, crossed it, and arrived safely in the street.

But now he felt anxious for the beautiful

being he had snatched from a fiery tomb; he tore away part of her garments which had attracted the consuming flames, and in a short time he recalled her to a consciousness of life and feeling. It was a lovely girl whom Don Alonso had saved, for the excessive emotion under which she laboured was not sufficient to obscure the charms with which nature had so liberally gifted her.

"Where am I?" she demanded, languidly opening her eyes.

"Fear nothing, gentle maiden," answered Aguilar, "you are with a friend."

"Oh save me! Save me from the Moors," she cried vehemently; not yet entirely aware into whose power she had fallen.

"Those rebels cannot harm you," exclaimed her preserver, "they fly like timorous deer before our triumphant banners, and you are now by the side of Alonso de Aguilar."

The welcome sound of this glorious name acted powerfully on the feelings of Theodora and, perfectly tranquillised, she cried with ardour—

"Thanks! thanks! to that God, who will not forsake his creatures in the hour of peril!" then turning to Don Alonso, she continued,—  
"The head of the Aguilars will not forsake an unfortunate child of the house of Monteblanco?"

Don Alonso was struck with a well known name; but as Theodora appeared too much exhausted for an explanation, without inquiring into the cause of the strange situation in which he found her, he contented himself with repeating his assurances of protection.

"Duty," he added, "summons me hence, but you shall find nothing wanting on my part to insure your safety. In my house at Granada, and from my daughter Leonor, you will experience all the kindness that may tend to mitigate your sorrows, until you are restored to the embrace of your venerable parent."

He then turned to one of his attendants, and proceeded:—

"Ramirez, you will conduct this lady to Granada: to your protection I commend her, and see that she be treated with all the

consideration due to the charge of Alonso de Aguilar."

Ramirez bowed, and singling out an escort of a dozen men, prepared to obey his leader's orders; whilst Don Alonso, taking leave of Theodora, proceeded with his conquering band to join Don Antonio de Leyva. Each took a different way, and in a short time left the ill-fated town to the melancholy possession of the dying and the dead; occupied alone by the few wretches, to whom a spark of lingering life still adhered, and whose sufferings were shortly to be terminated in the general conflagration now fast approaching to its crisis.

## CHAPTER V.

La cosa mas alegre que en la vida,  
Permite al ser mortal humana gloria,  
Es la patria del hombre tan querida  
Despues de alguna prospera victoria.

*Lope de Vega.*

Ah ! che per tutto io veggo,  
Qualche oggetto funesto !

*Metastasio.*

GRANADA now presented a scene of animated confusion. The repeated successes of the Christians against the rebels, and the intelligence lately received of the defeat of El Feri de Benastepar, with the total destruction of his forces, filled the inhabitants of that city with joy. Various bands of musicians paraded the gay and busy streets, uniting their harmonious strains with the more solemn sounds of the bells, whilst the joyous laugh,

and other clamorous evidences of pleasure, filled the air with a confused yet pleasing din.

It was amidst this tumult of rejoicing, that Theodora entered the city of Granada. Her party had travelled slowly, so that the intelligence of the recent victory had reached the place before them, and they were not surprised at the extraordinary excitement of popular feeling. The animated scene served, in some degree, to draw her mind from its gloomy recollections, for during her journey she had again relapsed into her former state of despondency. She was now traversing the principal streets of that far-famed and renowned city, so long the grand arena of the Moslem's greatness, now the undisputed dominion of the victorious Christian. Every step she advanced exhibited some new object to awaken her curiosity or excite her feelings, such as a stranger must feel upon arriving at a city so lately rescued from the possession of an hereditary enemy.

Relics of Moorish grandeur were every

where discernible ; every street, every building, nay the very pavement on which they trod, teemed with associations of by-gone glory and departed power. The city was now chiefly inhabited by Spaniards; yet a considerable portion of its population consisted of Moors, who scrupulously adhered to their national costume, strikingly contrasted by its gaiety with the less fanciful but more manly attire of the Christians. The two people widely differed in all points, though now enclosed within the same precincts. Two mortal and implacable enemies, united in apparent friendship, paraded the streets, or tenanted the dwellings of Granada.

The high balconies of the city were hung with costly drapery, and the turrets of the magnificent palaces adorned with a profusion of large waving banners and gay pennons. Every window was crowded with rank and beauty, witnessing the gambols of the merry children or the boisterous recreations of the populace. The streets themselves afforded a quaint and curious spectacle, for in promis-



cuous and gay confusion were seen the splendid apparel of the noble, and the modest garb of the peasant; the shining armour and waving plumes of the Christian warrior, and the gaudy fantastic habiliments of the Moslem. With them appeared the solemn and lugubrious vestments of the ecclesiastical dignitaries, and the coarse habit and shaven crown of the monk.

Theodora was lost in wonder, so numerous and so whimsically contrasted were these various objects. But amongst this motley assemblage there were some who appeared more capable of interesting her heart and her fancy. She espied those who were no sincere partakers of the general joy, and whose sad eye and clouded brow belied the accents of their tongue. Some, who vainly strove to animate their countenances with a pleasure that was foreign to their hearts. The dejected and down-fallen Moors were among these; for though they had submitted to the Christian government, and admitted to the fullest extent the criminality of their

fellow-countrymen, yet they could not but be sensible that it was the defeat and annihilation of their friends and former companions that occasioned these demonstrations of joy. Besides, they felt the pangs of shame and degradation, rendered still more poignant by a consciousness of the superior courage of those whose destruction they were now in some measure compelled to celebrate. To this was added the painful conviction, that although they might outwardly be treated by the Spaniards as fellow-subjects, no true sentiment of esteem and friendship could be awakened in the breasts of those who must always consider them as vanquished enemies. Besides the hatred which rankled alike in the hearts of the followers of the Cross and those of the Crescent, a hatred, which had been hereditary for many ages, was of itself an insurmountable obstacle to the friendly conjunction of two such different people. The Moors were therefore a prey to the most galling reflections, and smarting under the bitterest disappointment, at the very time that

pleasure and contentment alone seemed to hold dominion in Granada.

Theodora beheld these unfortunates with a lively sensation of pity, though they had certainly little claim to it. The image of the odious Cañeri was of itself sufficient to banish any kindly feeling; yet they were forlorn and wretched, and this was alone a sacred title to the sympathies of her generous soul. She was, however, soon obliged to recall her thoughts to a subject of individual interest, for as she was doubling the *Plaza nueva*,\* amongst the various Moors that paraded about, her eyes lighted on one that struck a sensation of dread to her very heart. It was Bermudo the renegade! She could not be deceived in his person, though his outward appearance had undergone a material alteration. The ingenuity which had changed his dress and disguised his manner, could not however alter the peculiar expression of his eye, and the chilling tranquil sternness of his features. Theodora trembled, for she per-

\* New Square.

ceived that she had been recognised by the renegade, who intensely fixed his eyes upon her, as though her person powerfully arrested his attention. She turned with terror from the dreaded object, and during the rest of her way, felt an involuntary apprehension at looking around her.

The party of Theodora had by this time arrived at the palace of Don Alonso de Aguilar, but an entrance was not to be effected without considerable difficulty, all the avenues leading to it being crowded with the multitude eager to congratulate the daughter of the victorious warrior. The lady herself appeared for a moment at the balcony, gaily surrounded by gallant knights and pages, waving her silken scarf in grateful acknowledgment of these public demonstrations of respect. Ramirez turned, and conducting his party to the back of the mansion, sought an easier admission by the garden entrance. Theodora was soon ushered into a splendid apartment, while her attentive conductor proceeded alone, to fulfil his instructions to the daughter of Aguilar.

During the short interval that succeeded the departure of Ramirez, the mind of Theodora was alternately agitated between hope and fear. Not that she had any reason to doubt the reception she would experience from Leonor, but she felt the painful difficulty of affording the explanation that would naturally be required of her upon the arrival of Aguilar, whose return was daily expected. These painful reflections, however, were checked by the return of Ramirez, who taking the trembling hand of Theodora, led her to Leonor's private apartment. They traversed in silence the spacious corridors of the palace, and before Theodora had time to collect her scattered senses, a pair of folding doors were thrown open, and she found herself in the presence of one whom her fervid imagination had almost portrayed as something more than mortal.

Leonor advanced gracefully to meet her guest, and observing her extreme emotion, endeavoured to sooth it by the most friendly expressions.

"So lovely a being," she said, as she led

the passive Theodora towards a sofa, "needed not the recommendation of my noble parent, to be received with cordial hospitality by his daughter;—but rest yourself," she continued, "for you must be in want of repose, after the journey you have undergone."

Theodora, notwithstanding this reassuring tone, was unable to give utterance to the acknowledgments of her grateful heart. There was something in the whole appearance of Leonor that contributed to heighten her natural timidity, and even the kindness and affability of the daughter of Aguilar could not entirely dissipate an indefinable sensation of awe, which Theodora felt in her presence. She had been at first sight struck by the imposing and majestic beauty of Leonor, together with the dazzling splendour in which she was attired. Her senses were bewildered in the contemplation of so much grandeur and magnificence.

Indeed Leonor de Aguilar was designed by nature to produce those sensations in minds far more familiar with scenes of great-

ness and power than the simple and unsophisticated heart of the guileless Theodora. Leonor de Aguilar was a model of that peculiar beauty which partakes at once of the lovely graces of her own sex, with some of the more decided attributes of man. Her form was largely but most elegantly framed, and exhibited a classic boldness of contour that perfectly harmonized with her stateliness of carriage. Her complexion was of a transparent brown, mellowed by the rich rosy tint that played over it, and her large brilliant eyes sparkled with dazzling and energetic fire. Dark glossy tresses overshadowed her oval face, where a beautiful shaped aquiline nose, and lips of the deepest carnation, contributed to give her countenance an expression of striking brilliancy. Yet there was something stern in the resolute flash of her eye, and the bold curl of her lip. A slight tincture of hauteur was likewise occasionally to be detected, through the affability of manner by which she was characterized; and in the very tone of her voice, even when

attuned to the softest expressions of kindness and regard, there was a chord that vibrated upon the ear, which told of conscious superiority and masculine genius. Yet these peculiarities were favorable to the commanding style of her beauty, and served to heighten the impression which her natural attractions could not fail to produce.

"But come," said Leonor, after the first salutations, and when Theodora felt a little reassured; "come, I must introduce you to the grand saloon, where some of the first nobility of Spain are now assembled: I am sure," she added with a smile, "those gallant knights will be greatly beholden to me for bringing so lovely an addition to their society."

"Your kind flattery," replied Theodora, "would certainly arouse a feeling of vanity, if any such, alas! still lingered in my heart; but at present sad recollections too severely oppress me to render society desirable: besides, I should feel myself lost amidst so brilliant an assemblage."



"Well," continued Leonor, "I will not impose any exertion upon my fair guest that may not accord with the present state of her mind; let us, however, hope that her sorrows are not so deeply rooted but that, in the kindness of her friends, she may soon find some alleviation. Yet," she added, "if you will not join in our festivities, you will at least be able to witness them, without inconvenience, from your casement. The grand procession will presently move towards the cathedral, to return a solemn thanksgiving for the successes of the Christian arms. The queen will shortly leave her palace, attended with the flower of Spanish warriors, and all the rank and beauty of Granada. And now, my gentle friend," she continued in a kind tone, "I shall be obliged for a time to leave you, as my attendance on the queen is absolutely required."

She then appointed two of her maids to attend on her guest, and renewing her assurances of regard and friendship, she retired, leaving the unfortunate daughter of Monte-

blanco deeply impressed with gratitude and admiration.

Upon the departure of Leonor, Theodora drew near the window, and gazed on the moving multitude below. The increased clamour of the populace, and an unusual hurrying to and fro, together with the tolling of the cathedral bells, now announced that the procession had left the palace, and was approaching. Soon after, the sumptuous cavalcade came in sight, slowly moving forwards. A magnificent banner was borne at the head of the procession, displaying the cross of Santiago, patron of Spain, gorgeously embroidered thereon, and followed by the knights of that noble military order, in their grand ceremonial costumes. After them, came those of the order of Calatrava, with their brave and renowned maestre at their head. A long train of noblemen and knights, all martially equipped, and mounted on beautiful steeds, succeeded, bearing amongst them the spoils taken in the late conflicts. Isabella herself at last appeared, seated on a

superb milk-white charger, with the ease and elegance of a perfect equestrian. She was immediately attended by the Count de Tendilla, governor of the city, and the Archbishop of Toledo and that of Granada, who were to officiate at the cathedral. The splendor of the cavalcade was diversified by ranks of friars and monks of various orders, who moved in regular order, mingling the sounds of solemn anthems to the notes of clarions and other warlike instruments. Then the incense rose to the sky, flinging around a grateful odour, whilst the din and confusion of the overwhelming throng that closed the march, evinced the interest which the scene excited in the minds of the people.

Theodora gazed after the procession until it gradually diminished in the distance, and the clamorous noise was gradually subdued into a tranquil and pleasing murmur. The pageant moved forward to the cathedral, where a grand *Te Deum* was sung, and a thousand voices united in heartfelt gratitude

to that awful power which had been so propitious to the Christian people.

Theodora now retired from the casement, and abandoned herself to her former thoughts. The sumptuous display she had just witnessed forcibly recalled her mind to the subject of its constant meditations. Alas! amongst the host of gallant knights that composed the scene, the best and bravest was not there; and the image of her murdered lover, arrayed in terror, rose sadly before the imagination of Theodora. Her attendants, ignorant of the nature of her sorrows, but in the true spirit of female compassion, endeavoured to divert her thoughts to more pleasing channels. The mind may be better weaned from scenes of past distress, by interesting the curiosity, than by a consolation which often, instead of healing the lacerated heart, serves but to increase the torture of the wound.

The kind females, therefore, led Theodora to view the interior of the palace, which, from

---

its venerable antiquity, and the interesting relics of Moorish taste and ornament it contained, afforded a subject for curious investigation. The quaint and fantastic carvings of the cornices of the grand saloon, together with its Arabic devices and decorations, and the mosaic pavement, harmonized strangely with the armorial bearings and heavily grouped emblems of Christian panoplies.

Theodora gazed on these warlike trophies with a listless indifference, but when she came to a long gallery hung round with pictures, both of Christian and Moorish subjects, her feelings were powerfully excited, and she beheld those living mockeries of departed greatness with a deep sensation of awe. Many a picture was there which recorded the faded splendour of the Moslems. Many a scene of the chivalrous tales and amours of the valiant Gazul and the love-smitten Lindaraxa, and other characters now highly prized in Moorish legend. These scenes of private and individual interest were artificially mixed with other representations of a more general

and dignified nature. Battles and sieges and valorous deeds of Mahomedan warriors were gaudily portrayed by the Moorish artist, who had taken care to bestow with his pencil a gratuitous splendor upon the exploits of his countrymen, as they passed in review under his hand. These works were succeeded by others of a very different character, in which the Christian artist had ingeniously taken the hint from his Mahomedan rival, and had fairly outdone the infidel in the fierce and indomitable expression of his heroes.

These were followed by a series of portraits, both of living personages and others who were long since dead. Amongst these, Theodora saw the mighty form of Alonso de Aguilar, on whose noble countenance was stamped that commanding expression which brought vividly to her memory the image of his daughter Leonor. There also stood as in life the renowned and terrible Ruy Diaz de Vivar, surnamed *El Cid Campeador*,<sup>(2)</sup> mounted on his scarcely less celebrated charger Babieca, both actively engaged in the des-

truction of their Moorish enemies; for it is a received tradition that the animal had an instinctive horror and abhorrence of the infidels, and accordingly never lost an opportunity of exhibiting towards them his patriotic propensities by the force of his bites and kicks. There was likewise the awful and sanctified figure of the apostle *Santiago*, riding like a whirlwind through the air, on his milk-white horse, and accomplishing in his progress those wonderful and miraculous deeds which have so much embellished the pages of the old legends, and from whose rich sources the romancers have derived such heroic spirit and power. The portraits of the Catholic Ferdinand; and his noble spouse Isabella, were also there, together with many other Christian sovereigns and warriors, who had played conspicuous parts in the history of their country.

Theodora unconsciously wandered along until she had nearly reached the extremity of the gallery, when, as she was about to return, her eye suddenly alighted on a figure

that thrilled the inmost fibres of her frame. It was *him* she saw, so truly portrayed and so exact in every lineament, that the painted canvas seemed endowed with life. Gomez Arias was there ; his bold demeanor, his proud smile, the intelligent glance of his eye—all, all was religiously preserved in that inanimate counterpart of living reality. Theodora gazed and gazed, until her dilated eyes seemed ready to start from their orbits. The unfortunate girl was rivetted to the spot, for she felt a melancholy pleasure in dwelling on the semblance of those handsome features. She descried all the graces of her lover in that perfect memorial of him, and her own vivid imagination imparted to it life and passion. She stood before the picture, till she fancied her lover present, earnestly gazing on her immovable form, and she felt a portion of that happiness which he never failed to create when he whispered the ardent vows of everlasting love.

Theodora remained some time plunged in a tide of feeling, painful yet pleasing, and in the recollection of past scenes she almost for-



got the horrid fate of Gomez Arias. She gazed, and in the height of her enthusiasm she was happy; but, alas! how short, how transient was the delusion which, when dissolved, would tend to sink her deeper in affliction! The brazen, heavy voice of the cathedral bell suddenly broke the magic charm. Theodora started from her reverie, and all again became a chaos of misery and despondence.

The pageant was now returning from the Cathedral, and once more the tolling of bells and the martial strains rung in the air. Theodora, unwilling to betray her situation to her attendants, returned to her apartment, where she endeavoured to conceal her emotion as well as the high excitement of her feelings would permit.

The generous Leonor soon repaired to her charge.

"Come," said she, as she entered, "I suppose you will at least grace the convivial table, since I could not prevail on you to adorn the procession?"

"Suffer me," gently answered Theodora,

“to trespass so far on your kind indulgence as to excuse my absence from the feast. My mind, alas! is in no state to enjoy the revelry, and I should but cast a gloom on the brilliancy of the scene.”

Leonor had a superior knowledge of human nature, and an unusual quickness of discernment. She prudently considered that consolation could much better be promoted by a gentle and timely acquiescence with the desires of the afflicted, than by an overstrained and ill-timed attempt to obtrude gaiety on a mind that was not prepared for its admission. Theodora's request to keep her apartment was accordingly complied with. There she passed the remainder of the day in busy communion with her own thoughts, and bewildered in contemplating the conduct that she ought to adopt in her unfortunate situation. Her forlorn heart naturally and affectionately turned to the home of her childhood; her ideas fondly returned to the pure channel from whence they had too long wandered, and momentarily overpowered the terrors

which a consciousness of guilt presented to her imagination. Her father would not discard his afflicted, his repentant child. Her offence towards him had been great, but it could not be greater than the parental anxiety, the fond, boundless affection he had ever shown to the only remaining pledge of her mother's love, the sole descendant of his ancient house.

These consoling reflections happily soothed the heart of Theodora. She arose from her despondency with a sudden start of resolution, and determined that on the moment her generous deliverer should arrive, she would acquaint him with her wishes, and crave his assistance to conduct her to the feet of her sorrowing parent.

## CHAPTER VI.

Così gl' interi giorni in lungo incerto  
Sonno gemo ! ma poi quando la bruna  
Notte gli astri nel ciel chiama e la luna  
E il freddo aer di mute ombre è coverto ;  
Dove selvoso è il piano è più deserto  
Allor lento io vagando, ad una ad una  
Palpo le piaghe onde la rea fortuna  
E amore e il mondo hanno il mio core aperto.

*Ugo Foscolo.*

It was night, gentle and serene, such a night as in the favored clime of Andalusia is wont to succeed the sultriness of a summer's day. The bright canopy of heaven shone in passionless serenity, emblazoned with its countless stars. The moon flung a solemn light on the tall palaces and stately turrets of Granada, and tinged the citron groves of Don Alonso's garden with a flood of chaste and silvery splendor. The placid beams reposed

calmly and unbroken on the bosom of the still lake, or danced fitfully on the bubbling eddies of the limpid water, as it fell on the marble basin with a refreshing sound.

How beautiful this calm! In such a spot as this could the wearied mind taste of the sweet repose of an earthless spirit. But hark! the breathless silence is violated by a low harsh sound. It is the grating voice of yonder ponderous Moorish casement. It opens, and a female form is there wrapped in contemplation; her eye is fixed, her figure motionless. She now raises the trembling fingers to her white forehead, and reclines on her arm, as she watches, with the unconscious gaze of an absent mind, the sportive waters as they played below. She seemed to delight in the soft stillness, and to gather fresh life amidst the mysterious shades that reigned around. Spirit-like, she sat in the frowning window, enrobed in shadow, and the cold whiteness that pencilled out her form, seemed to array it with the character of a living statue.

It was Theodora—the hapless Theodora,

who, a prey to the rooted melancholy that consumed her, had left her couch to enjoy undisturbed the luxury of grief. The garden soon brought to her fancy recollections of past scenes, and the source of all her present misfortunes. It was in a garden, and on such nights as these that her meetings with Gomez Arias had taken place, as well as the last interview which had decided her fate, and given birth to all the miseries which followed. Tranquil and serene was all around; Theodora felt a wild and romantic sensation of delight, while gazing on objects fraught with associations of past bliss and present misery. The hallowed placidity of the blue vaulted heavens; the soft whispering of the foliage that slumbered in the cold moonlight; the spectre-like appearance of the tall trees, which stood partly enrobed in shadowy darkness, and partly glowing in serene and chastened splendor; the gentle murmuring of the sportive breeze — all tended to lead her senses into a delusive, but pleasing reverie. She listened, and thought she heard *his* voice.

She looked tremblingly as if in the expectation of the appearance of her lover. The thicket of myrtle rustles and shakes, and flings on the air its load of fragrance, when from its green bosom softly steals forward a tall and majestic figure.

Could it be possible? Or had her bewildered imagination conjured up the airy phantom to deceive her? It was *he*—Gomez Arias—and as she gazed intensely, the shadow moved slowly along, lengthening in the moonlight as it proceeded. No delusion was here; it was indeed her lover she beheld, moving with the same graceful manner as when she saw him last in the garden of her father. The phantom approached, not in the unearthly sickly semblance of a tenant of the tomb, but radiant with the joy of a successful lover; his eye beaming with the glow of life. It moved! it passed! 'tis gone — and Theodora, in the complication of her feelings, remained with her eyes fixed, looking intently on the space where she had distinguished the form of her lover.

During some time she remained plunged in a delightful trance, till the solemn knell of a neighbouring convent, summoning the cloistered monks to their orisons, suddenly dissolved the potent charm, and banished the bright illusion for the reality of sorrow. The dear image of her lover had departed, and a veil of gloom seemed to fall over the surrounding scene. An unearthly chillness pervaded the air; the night wind sighed mournfully through the rustling boughs of the trees; the moon threw a colourless light from behind a shroud of clouds, and the semblance of death seemed to reign around.

Theodora could no longer sustain the dreary scene, and she hurried back to her couch, to linger through the night in the unavailing attempt to court repose. Alas! refreshing sleep came not to close her weary eyelids. At intervals, indeed, a heavy slumber stole over her, but so oppressive was its influence, that she struggled hard to regain her senses. The night wore away, and the morning dawned, but it brought no alleviation to

---



her sorrow. At an early hour she rose from her couch, and, as if led by an instinctive impulse, she drew near the window that commanded a view of the garden. There, musing on the vision of her past night, she was surprised by the entrance of Lisarda, one of her attendants. She came bustling in with an air of importance, and apparently with a firm resolution that no opportunity should escape in the proffer of her good services, and in the exercise of her loquacious talents.

“Good day, sweet lady! Save you, my dear lady! How have you passed the night?—Very composedly I trow, for this is a most quiet and sequestered apartment: but, our Lady defend us! how pale you look;—surely, you are not ill?—*La virgen nos valga*.\* Samuel Mendez shall be commanded here forthwith; for this same Samuel, you must know, is a very sapient leech, and well versed in occult medical science, though a very dog of a cursed unbelieving Jew:<sup>(8)</sup> he shall be sent for anon; there is no cause to fear him, for the infidel

\* Our lady protect us.

dare not use any of his poisonous drugs to such as you, my sweet lady. The *Samaritano*\* would answer with his life any mischance to yours; and that is methinks a right way of effecting cures. So permit me to send for Samuel Mendez."

"Thank you most kindly," answered Theodora, "but my disease is not to be removed by the powers of medicine. Alas! it is seated in the mind," she added, smiling sadly, "and there all the science of Samuel Mendez would be unavailing."

"Cheer up, my sweet lady," returned Lisarda, "for this is a time of rejoicing at Granada, and it would be a pity to have one sorrowful heart amidst the revelries of this mansion. Good heavens! we are all mad for joy in the very anticipation of so much feasting and merry-making."

"I congratulate you sincerely," said Theodora, "though I cannot be a partaker of the general joy."

"Oh, but you must," exclaimed Lisarda,

\* Samaritan—term of reproach.

“you must be glad, aye, and rejoice too ;— and how can you in troth do otherwise, seeing that our master, Don Alonso de Aguilar, is hourly expected in the city ?”

“It will indeed,” returned Theodora, “throw a beam of comfort into my poor heart to behold my brave and generous deliverer, and to pour forth the tribute of my humble gratitude, which he so justly deserves.”

“His arrival,” continued Lisarda, with marvellous volubility of tongue, “is the signal of numberless pleasures; for now, thank God and the mighty *Santiago*, the Moors have had such a dressing that they will be in no humour for some time to renew their unruly frolics, and that happy event which we have so long a time been anxiously awaiting will at last be accomplished.”

“Yes,” said Theodora, mechanically, “peace will be restored.”

“Aye, peace will be restored,” quoth she of the expeditious tongue; “peace will be restored; and in sooth how should it not? But then that is not the only happiness in store

for the friends and retainers of Don Alonso."

As she said this, Lisarda looked steadfastly on Theodora, as if expecting to be questioned about the said happiness, but as she perceived no symptoms of such an intention, she found the necessity of affording both questions and answers, lest the dialogue should draw to a conclusion, a catastrophe much dreaded by the good Lisarda.

"Now, by *San Jose Bendito*!" she continued in the tone of one that is most good-naturedly inclined to give unsought-for information; "my gentle lady, I would venture to assert that you cannot guess the motive of such happy anticipations."

"I cannot indeed," answered Theodora, with indifference.

"Well, I will keep you no longer in suspense, since you evince so anxious a desire to be acquainted with all the particulars."

Theodora betrayed some little impatience at the unconscionable chatter of her at-

tendant; but the giddy maid, heedless of every thing, continued in a tone of great delight—

“So, the Lord save us! but the happiness in question is nothing less than a wedding.”

“A wedding!” cried Theodora, with some emotion.

“Aye, a wedding,” repeated Lisarda, emphatically, accompanying the stress she laid on the word with a most appropriate movement of her head and hands, as the right one struck the palm of its left companion, in token of asseveration: “A wedding,” she continued; “and such a wedding too, that the like has not been seen at Granada for many, many a year. Let them boast of their Moorish gallantry and their infidel marriages—a fig for them! No, no; a Christian for me—a Christian, who will be satisfied with one woman, and in truth why should he not?”

“And who is the fortunate bride?” demanded Theodora, not from any motive of

curiosity, but merely to acquiesce in the loquacious humor of her attendant.

"The bride!" exclaimed Lisarda, "the bride! why, who should be the bride?—Have I not already told you?"

"No, indeed, you have not."

"Really," resumed Lisarda, conceitedly, "for a thoughtless silly girl, I am the most unaccountable female in Spain."

Theodora did not attempt to contradict her, as she was certainly a most unaccountable girl for a woman of forty.

"Well," proceeded Lisarda, "before it again slips from my memory, I must acquaint you that the bride is no other than our beloved and most noble mistress, the lady Doña Leonor."

"She well deserves a gentle bridegroom," observed Theodora, with affability.

"She does in troth," replied Lisarda; "and how should she not, being as she is? We have had no lack of suitors—aye, and the noblest. Good Heavens! what ado there has been about it—gallants we have had,

clustering about us like bees when they flock around their queen. The bridegroom is indeed a most deserving and accomplished cavalier; and so he should, to be the favored choice of Doña Leonor. However, he is not the one I patronized, and who I hoped at one time would marry my lady—he, alas! was prevented from proceeding in so desirable an engagement, not from any fault of his or mine either, but from an unexpected event that presented the most insurmountable impediment to the marriage.”

“And that was—?” inquired Theodora.

“Death!” replied Lisarda: “it being rumoured and readily believed, that the unfortunate caballero was murdered by those blood-thirsty Moors of the Alpujarras; and indeed his long disappearance from Granada makes the unwelcome intelligence to rest on no shallow foundation.”

Theodora felt an involuntary chill at this part of her attendant’s narration; for the similarity of fate between Leonor’s lover and her own could not but be productive of a most harrowing sensation. Lisarda, however,

continued, unconscious of the pang she had inflicted.

“And it was a marvellous pity,” said she, “for a more gallant and generous cavalier was not easily to be met with in all Spain. So gentle, so brave, so rich, and so generous withal;—now, never did he appear before me, but he needs must force some present or other upon me; and, indeed, spite of my shyness, I found the greatest difficulty in resisting the acceptance of gifts which were offered in so delicate a manner: peace be to his soul! it was always a ring, a gem, a pair of pendants, or——”

“And what is the name of the present bridegroom?” interrupted Theodora.

“Certainly he is a sweet gallant too, and in great estimation at court——”

“And his name is——?” inquired Theodora.

“Though, to say the truth, there are many others equally meritorious. It is not the *Maestre de Calatrava*; oh, no; his attractions are rather too mature to suit the taste of *Dofia Leonor*.”

“Who is he?” again demanded Theodora



"A most handsome man, certainly; now—but do not suppose it is Don Felix de Almagro, or young Garcilaso, or Don Juan de ——— No,———".

"Well, but, good Lisarda, what is his name?"

"Oh, he bears a most glorious name; but now I think on't, what a thoughtless, silly girl I am; surely I was to bring you a beautiful dress, that my lady ordered for you: sweet lady, you must forgive me; I will run forthwith and rectify my fault."

Then, without waiting for a reply, she flew out of the room. Theodora felt a strange sensation at the intelligence she had just received. A wedding was shortly to be solemnized, at which her presence would naturally be required, and the idea of witnessing a ceremony which would bring to her mind a train of painful associations, failed not to increase her agitation. Then she was lost in conjectures respecting the bridegroom, and she felt impressed with a belief that he could be no other than Don Antonio de Leyva. She felt a dread at the prospect of appearing

before him, whom her venerable parent had chosen for her partner in life.

Theodora strove to drive away such unpleasant images, and to divert her attention she hurried to the garden. There she walked to the same spot where the resemblance of her lover had appeared the preceding night; feeling a strange indefinable delight in visiting a spot endeared by the awful visitation of her beloved and never to be forgotten Gomez Arias. In the garden, therefore, she remained some time, now walking amidst fragrant avenues of orange and citron, now resting on the marble edge of the fountain, refreshing her hands and face in the transparent liquid, or gazing on the clear and sparkling pebbles embedded on the golden sand. Her sighs seemed attuned to the soft but melancholy sound of the murmuring fountain, and she was insensibly falling into her wonted train of reverie, when she was startled by the noise of advancing footsteps; she raised her eyes and perceived a man coming directly across the path on which she

was standing; to her utter amazement, she beheld in the disturber of her meditations the person, the very person of Roque. The valet himself was rivetted to the spot at this mutual recognition, and his features exhibited a curious amalgamation of sensations difficult to be defined. He crossed himself thrice, uttered a faint ejaculation, and, with wandering eyes and open mouth, he looked and looked again, as if doubting the reality of what he saw. Being at length perfectly satisfied that it was Theodora herself, the unhappy and forsaken victim of his master, he made a hasty movement to leave the place.

“Stay, Roque, stay!” eagerly cried Theodora; “thou surely dost not mean to leave me thus:—What alarms thee? Is it my dejected and forlorn appearance? Alas! it may well awaken thy surprise; for deep and bitter anguish has left its sad traces on my features.”

Roque then approached, but not without casting a look around, as if fearful of being observed.

“What ails thee, Roque?” demanded Theo-

dora surprised; "thou tremblest,—wherefore? What mystery is here?"

"*El cielo, San Pedro y San Pablo me valgan!*" ejaculated Roque, again crossing himself.

"Oh!" cried Theodora, clasping her hand in eager supplication—"do not harrow up my feelings with this suspense :—Speak!—"

"Good heavens! my lady, how came you here?"

"Alas!" answered Theodora, "the tale of my sufferings is as tedious in length as it has been deep in sorrow; rather inform me of matters far more interesting to my heart: tell me," she then proceeded, with vehement earnestness, "tell me the circumstances of that horrid event which has doomed me for ever to despair."

"That horrid event!" re-echoed Roque, with a look of marvellous stupidity.

"Ah! Roque, it was a fearful deed, and not in vain did my heart warn me with ominous forebodings."

Yes, gentle lady," said Roque, in a tone

of compunction, "it was a fearful deed, I confess."

"And thou, Roque," continued Theodora, "thou hast to answer for a great share of the misery which ensued."

"Alas, my dear lady! I know that my courage failed me in that dreadful moment, but perhaps I am not wholly undeserving of pardon, for what other course could I then pursue?"

"To fight," resolutely said Theodora.

"Fight," returned the valet, "fight! good God! you would not have had me fight a host of ruffian Moors, would you, lady? A thousand they might have been, for aught I know. Indeed, at the time, I lost my talent for calculation, but they looked as many, and as for poor Roque, whom Heaven has been pleased to endow with a most pacific temperament, thinking of fighting a thousand Moors, he might as well be expected to engage against Satan, backed by a whole legion of his infernal subjects."

"But was it well," rejoined Theodora,

“ to abandon thy master in the hour of danger?”

“ Abandon my master !” exclaimed Roque, “ *válgame el cielo !* Under favor, Señora, it was my master that abandoned me.”

“ Out upon thee, fellow ! I thought thee possessed of more manly feelings than to make light with so sad a subject, and introduce an unseemly jest.”

“ By all the saints in the calendar, lady—but I am in no mood for merriment. I am not in very truth, and may the first jest I attempt to utter strangulate me outright, before it escapes from my lips. But really, with respect to abandoning my master, thank the blessed virgin, that is a crime of which no one can accuse me. A man cannot help feeling shy at engaging in broils and combats, if his star doth not propel him thereto,—and that in verity is pretty nearly my case ; but if any one is tempted to question my fidelity, this miserable carcass of mine can bear witness to the contrary, by displaying the honorable bruises I have reaped in the

service of my master.—Alack! had I been less constant in following my Señor Gomez Arias, certain cudgellings and beatings without number would not so continually have fallen to the lot of Roque.”

“Darest thou speak in this strain,” interposed Theodora, “when thou betookest thyself to a shameful flight, at the very first appearance of the Moors, leaving thy gallant and unfortunate master to be murdered at their hands?”

At this unexpected accusation, Roque appeared astounded, and for some time could collect no adequate term to express his surprise. He cast a look of mixed amazement and compassion, shrugged up his shoulders, and, in a scarcely audible tone, muttered to himself:—“Poor thing! may the Lord preserve her—sorrow hath brought this about.”

Theodora, heedless of his manner, continued;—“Alas! what was the courage of a single man against the united force of so many enemies?”

"Aye—aye—nothing," responded Roque, "nothing certainly;—but under favor, my good lady, though my master's courage stood ever the fairest test, yet I do not clearly perceive how he is entitled to encomiums for feats which, though he might, he *did* not actually achieve."

"What!" exclaimed Theodora, with warmth, "would you even defraud his memory of its too-well merited guerdon, the possession of a glorious name?"

"Good my lady," humbly replied Roque, "I would not defraud my master of a single *maravedi*, much less of so valuable a treasure as a glorious name. But I am strangely puzzled to determine how I can deprive him of a commodity which in my hands would lose its worth. Nor indeed can I perceive why you bestow such commendations on the deeds of my master, since, in the instance to which you allude, I rather suspect he was in nowise anxious to distinguish himself."

"Thy speech," said Theodora, "is enigmatical, and wherefore it is so I cannot sur-



mise. But his very enemies confessed that he fought bravely, and fell like a hero. Aye, Roque, they further added, that had you not abandoned him in that critical moment, their victory would not have been so easily effected."

"*Santa Barbara!*" cried Roque, more astounded than ever, "the Moors said that? Well it was very kind of the *malandrines* to speak in such good terms of my honored master.—Good God! good God!" he then continued, in a confused incoherent manner—"My lady, pray forgive my impertinence, but will you tell me if I am awake?"

"Awake!" repeated Theodora.

"Yes, my dear lady, for either I must be now asleep, or you must have been dreaming when the facetious Moors favored you with such an extraordinary story."

"Oh, Roque! cease this ribaldry, so unbecoming in thee when we speak of *him* whom thou knowest I so much loved—when we speak of his untimely death."

"The death of Gomez Arias, say you!"

exclaimed Roque, retreating with increased amazement. "My master dead?—in the name of Heaven! what say you lady!"—

"The truth;—with these unhappy eyes did I see his murdered body in the Alpujarras:—art thou then, Roque, so ignorant of his fate?"

"Oh, quite so," replied Roque; "this is the very first intelligence I received of such an event;—and I suppose you will tell me next that you have seen his ghost."

"Alas!" returned Theodora, "it was but last night that I beheld his figure as perfectly as when I saw him last in the Alpujarras!"

Roque assumed as much gravity as he was able, considering the difficulty he had to restrain his risibility; and, supposing that the intellect of the poor lady was impaired, in a comic serious tone observed:—"Well, my master is a most wonderful man, that his murdered body should be food for the ravens of the Alpujarras, and his troubled spirit be haunting Don Alonso's garden; when at the same time I saw him myself not long since,

in perfect sanity of body and soul, parading the promenades of Granada."

Theodora gasped for breath; she gazed on Roque with astonishment. The valet was in the greatest perplexity; but thinking that Theodora still doubted the veracity of his statement, he again, in a serious tone and asseverating manner, said—"Yes, my lady, you are deceived—my master is alive."

"Alive!" screamed aloud Theodora, and her whole frame shook like the aspen leaf; "alive! where? where is he?"

"In this city, and will come to the palace presently. More I cannot tell you, lady;—permit me now to withdraw, and oh! that you might do the same!"

Roque, as we have already observed, was far from being of a cruel and hardened disposition, and his acquiescence in the unprincipled actions of his master arose more from dread of his character than perversity of heart. He was now strangely perplexed, anticipating the disastrous results which might spring from the unlooked-for meeting

---

of Gomez Arias and the forsaken victim of his satiated passion. He almost regretted having removed the error under which Theodora laboured with regard to her lover's death.

Meantime Theodora, partly recovered from the violent shock which her feelings had sustained, felt a chill of doubt and a vague apprehension of evil that deadened the first impression of transporting pleasure which the certainty of her Lope's existence had produced. She endeavoured to give a solution to the enigma, but met with none congenial to her feelings. The circumstance of her lover being in Granada, and apparently unconcerned for her fate, withered the budding hopes within her bosom, for she fondly imagined that Gomez Arias could never be separated from her but by death. This suspense was terrible, and Roque's demeanor tended to increase her anxiety. She fixed her starting eyes on him, and holding his hand with a fearful grasp, in a voice wild with emotion, she exclaimed :—" Roque ! Roque !

in the name of Heaven, unravel this mystery."

She hesitated a moment, but the very poignancy of her anguish gave her force to demand—"Did Gomez Arias, then, leave me in the power of the Moors without attempting my defence?"

Roque made no answer.

Theodora became intensely excited, and with the piercing voice of despair:—"Then it is true!" she exclaimed, "your silence confirms my fears!"

A ghastly smile was on her lip, and a deadly paleness overspread her features.

Roque now perceived the utter impossibility of keeping his master's cruelty any longer a secret from his victim: yet he dreaded to acquaint her with the whole extent of her misery; he trembled for the consequences that such an avowal would produce upon her feelings, and he knew that with a fond woman of extraordinary sensibility and elevated sentiments, the death of a lover might be more easily supported than his dereliction. On the other hand it was

imperatively demanded by circumstances that Gomez Arias and Theodora should never meet again; for, alas! such a meeting could be productive only of reproach and shame to the former—anguish, despair, and perhaps death to the latter.

Theodora, meantime, read in the agitated countenance of the valet a tale of distress more cruel than any she had yet endured; whilst Roque, who trembled lest, by an imprudent continuance of his interview with Theodora, they might be surprised by Gomez Arias, summoned up his resolution, and determined at once to acquaint her with her lover's treason:—"Lady!" he exclaimed with emphasis, "in the name of God, endeavour to brace your nerves against the dreadful intelligence I have to communicate.—You must forget him for ever;—nay, if you consult the happiness of all those that are interested in your welfare or in his, you will decide never to see him more."

"What mean you?" demanded Theodora, with redoubled agitation.

"Your lover is false, lady; you must fly to

your parent, or encounter the peril of being immured in the gloomy seclusion of a convent. Such were my master's intentions towards you, when the arrival of the Moors happened in time to frustrate them. Should he, however, learn that you are at Granada, where your presence may throw invincible impediments in his way, the knowledge would be perhaps attended with disastrous results. I am a poor man, a butt to sustain my master's ill humors, but I will not so far dishonor my feelings as to permit the possibility of your being exposed a second time to the dreaded manœuvres of Gomez Arias. Fly, lady, fly to your kind parent."

Theodora fixed a wild look on Roque, and the horrid nature of his recital seemed to have frozen the springs of feeling. She did not speak, nor was any passion, save that of despair, depicted on her countenance; a settled stupor sat upon her pallid brow, and shone in the cold glance of her eyes.

Roque was moved by the picture of loveliness that stood before him, motionless in the

intensity of grief; but he was conscious of the danger he incurred by protracting his stay.

"Alas!" he said in a soothing tone, "you are very, very unfortunate; but consider, lady, the consequences of our being seen together. Allow me to retire, then, and command my services; but, oh, do not by any means appear before——"

He was interrupted by Theodora, who suddenly started before that dreadful name once so endearing could be pronounced.

"Roque," she cried, in a tone and manner that bespoke her possessed of more resolution than could be gathered from the expression of her countenance, "Roque, I will retire; be silent, and let me see you again.—Yes," she added with a voice of presageful import, "it is better I should not see him more!"

She then hastily retired from the spot, and sought the way to her apartment. That feeling so deeply rooted in the female heart—the desire of probing a lover's perfidy to the utmost, determined her to follow the



valet's advice. No, she dreaded not the most disastrous consequences; for, alas! what has betrayed woman to fear, when she seeks justice from the man for whom she has sacrificed all! Is it death? Ah! it is her best refuge and only consolation!

## CHAPTER VII.

Sierpes apacienta el pecho  
De una muger ofendida.

*Moreto.*

Ah taci! ogni parola  
Mi drizza i crini; assai dicesti; basta  
Basta così, non proseguir.

*Monti.*

Roque made a precipitate retreat from the garden; for, anxious as the poor fellow was to render any service to Theodora, he still felt no inclination to incur thereby the displeasure of his master, and draw upon himself the full measure of his indignation. The valet resolved to keep a strict silence respecting his interview with Theodora, and he entertained a belief that the fears of the unfortunate girl would induce her to follow a similar course. Thus he flattered himself there was

nothing to apprehend further than the danger of an accidental meeting.

Theodora meantime, a prey to a thousand distracting fears, had locked herself within her chamber, in a miserable state of hopelessness. Tormented with various conflicting passions, she now boldly resolved to meet her perjured lover, and demand an explanation of his cruel and unnatural conduct; but again she was suddenly checked by an instinctive dread which seemed to freeze her powers of action. She despondingly threw herself upon the couch, that gaudy but unconscious witness of her sorrows, and as the briny drops fell fast from their sad fountains, and bedewed the rich silken covering, she exclaimed—

“Yes, it was he himself that I beheld last night.”

These few words conveyed a portion of that exquisite anguish that gave them birth.

It was a fearful idea : she had seen her lover a nocturnal visitor to that garden, his face decked with smiles, and his eyes replete with pleasure and hope. He was happy, and

thought no more of the lost Theodora. He had forsaken her—her whom he had vowed for ever to love, and to whom he had pledged his word to acknowledge her as his own before the world. This was a masterpiece of ingratitude; and yet Theodora hoped that ingratitude, that blackest stain of the human heart, might have prompted the dereliction of Gómez Arias, rather than love for another. To think that she had entirely lost his love, was a pang more cruel than all she had hitherto endured; and this alas! was the phantom which she strove in vain to chase away, and that most obtruded upon her mind.

The loquacious Lisarda was not tardy in making a second appearance: she knocked for admittance, and Theodora, who in her present state was but little predisposed to encourage her unmeaning chatter, felt nevertheless an inward desire for the presence of her attendant. By her means she could acquire a solution of the mystery with which she so much dreaded to be acquainted, and yet was so anxious to learn. She opened the

door, and Lisarda no sooner entered than with her accustomed volubility she began—

“ Well, well, my gentle lady, you must forgive me certainly; I have neglected you too long; but then consider, my good lady, what a day this is: what with the expectation of my master’s arrival, and the preparations for this wedding, the whole palace is thrown into a marvellous confusion.”

“ Say no more,” replied Theodora; “ you need not seek to excuse yourself; I am but a stranger here, and have no right whatever to engross the attention of any one, much less on such an occasion as the present.”

“ Aye, aye,” continued Lisarda, “ it is indeed a most busy time. Well, the glorious Don Alonso arrives to-day, and to-morrow his beautiful daughter will be led to the altar by her gallant bridegroom. Only think, my sweet lady, what a wedding this will be. The queen and the Maestre de Calatrava, in the absence of the king, are to be the sponsors.”

“ That mark of the royal favor,” said Theodora, “ speaks highly for the merits of both

the parties ; but I am yet to learn the name of the knight who has rendered himself deserving of such an honor."

She pronounced these last words in a faltering tone, and Lisarda, though a thoughtless woman, soon perceived her agitation.

" *Dios nos defienda !*"\* she cried, " what ails you, dear lady ? you look so shockingly pale. Well, it is all your fault for being set against taking counsel ; now if you could but be persuaded to admit the visit of Samuel Mendez, God knows how much you would profit by his advice ; for believe me, lady, the iniquitous Jew cures better than most of our good Christians."

" I assure you," interrupted Theodora, " that my unwillingness to acquiesce with your wishes does not arise from the circumstance of the doctor being a Jew, but merely because my indisposition can receive no benefit from medicine, whether it be administered by an infidel or a true believer.— So, I pray you mention no more this Samuel

\* God defend us.

Mendez, but rather tell me the name of the future partner of Leonor."

"Aye, fortunate indeed, Señora, you may well call him fortunate, for Doña Leonor is a most accomplished lady, a beautiful lady; and were it not that she is——"

"She is most accomplished," interrupted Theodora.

"She is in troth," retorted Lisarda, "and so dutiful a daughter withal. She is now going to meet her noble father in his triumphant entry into the city, and she will be accompanied by her future husband, and a numerous and splendid retinue.—But, hark! hear you not the tramp of horses, and the sound of trumpets?"

She flew to the window, and Theodora, in breathless anxiety, followed.

"There!" cried Lisarda, with glee, "they are about to depart. Now, see, my lady, Leonor mounts—the bridegroom holds the stirrup."

Theodora cast a terrified look, which shot a pang to her inmost heart—It was Gomez

Arias who helped Leonor to mount. Theodora saw enough—but one glance, and all the horrors of her fate were revealed. The deluding smile which had seduced her heart, the traitor eloquent eye which wrought her ruin, were now devoted to another.

Theodora uttered no piercing shriek; neither did sigh or groan escape her; but she silently sank backwards in the tranquillity of horror. She had now nothing else to hope or fear; no throbbing anxiety to forego,—no further perils to dread—the sum of her misery was complete, and dauntless she might encounter any disaster; for this last blow had imparted to her the passive courage of indifference and despair.

Lisarda, occupied with the dazzling objects which moved beneath, did not perceive Theodora's situation, and without taking her eyes from the cavalcade pursued her remarks:—

“Now they go—the Lord bless them, how handsome they look! Well, I do not blame my lady's taste, for certainly Don Lope is the most gallant of cavaliers. What think you,



my sweet lady? Well, certainly they do say he has many a grievous sin to answer for, in the list of innocent girls he has seduced and undone: the Lord defend them, poor creatures; I pity them. But it was surely their fault:—more fools they for trusting to the fair promises of such a man—what think you gentle lady, am I not right?”

Happily the cavalcade was now out of sight, and Lisarda's observations were accordingly cut short. But she immediately turned to Theodora, who had sat motionless on her couch from the first glance that had acquainted her with the full extent of her wretchedness.

“Well,” said the loquacious waiting maid, “what shall I do to divert you, lady? Really I am at a loss. If you are not moved by the splendid sight you have just now witnessed, I cannot imagine what will affect you. Mayhap I might afford some consolation, since you are so strongly bent against the assistance of Samuel Mendez.”

"Thank you," said Theodora, raising her eyes towards the speaker, "thank you for your kind intentions, but if anything could tend to the alleviation of my sorrows, it would be perhaps a free and unmolested indulgence of them."

"Oh, dear lady, but we must have no sorrowful faces at the wedding. *Virgen de las Angustias!* that would be dreadfully ominous. Cheer up, sweet lady; there is nothing in the world like a good example, and when you see every one rejoice, I am sure you will not mar the general joy. Cheer up, good lady—better days will come. To-morrow, at the wedding festival, your thoughts, I engage, will be fixed on other objects; such indeed as are interesting to every female who, like ourselves, is yet blessed in the primeval season of youth. Am I not right?"

"Happy!" cried Theodora, in a thrilling tone, "happy!" Then as if to veil the effect which her exclamation might produce, she

ded, "who can promise themselves happiness in this world?"

"Alack, and that is true!" responded Lisarda, "for many, many are the lovers who are born to be unfortunate and die of broken hearts." She strove to swell her own with a mighty sigh: "And even those who marry, how oft do they curse the day that—but this is neither here nor there."

"To-morrow! and is it really to-morrow, that the ceremony is to take place?" demanded Theodora.

"There is no doubt of it. God have mercy, the ceremony has been already delayed too long. The young lovers would have been united some months since, had not unavoidable impediments retarded the accomplishment of their mutual wishes."

A clamorous shout, and a burst of trumpets now announced the approach of Aguilar to Granada, and Lisarda with giddy steps sallied out, leaving Theodora to the undisturbed enjoyment of her gloomy reflections. The unfortunate child of Monteblanco had now

the most unequivocal proof of her lover's baseness and treachery: Gomez Arias was faithless, but what an aggravation of guilt attached to his infidelity! His cold, heartless villainy seemed to surpass all power of conception, and Theodora for some time remained like one striving to recal the fleeting illusion of a horrid dream. Then she clasped her hands fearfully over her swollen eyelids; a few large drops fell on her cold marbled hands, and in those eyes flashed the wild resolution of despair.

A bitter smile now gently curled those parched and pallid lips, and she raised her trembling fingers to her forehead, expressing all the passive agonies of an absent mind. Then suddenly, as if actuated by a powerful impulse, she sprung upon her feet: she cautiously drew towards the casement in a listening attitude, and the names of Aguilar and Gomez Arias which floated in lengthening sound along the air, threw additional excitement on her already distracted feelings. But one day more, and she was to witness the com-

pletion of her lover's union with her rival. What a train of frightful associations this image brought to mind !

Dreadful was the conflict that Theodora had to sustain, and in that unequal warfare, her whole frame underwent an appalling change : her eyes glistened, and her hands shook violently, as she threw back with a resolute movement the tresses of her redundant hair. Again she stopped as if brooding over some frightful design ; her throat became swollen with hysteric affection ; the blood that hitherto had seemed congealed in its source, rushed with impetuosity down its wonted channels, and the blue veins through which the little rivulet of life had gently flowed, now became dark and turbid as the mountain stream. Her eyes shot the lurid flashes of madness ; a wild laugh broke the harmony of the purest voice ; and a malignant curl usurped the place where heavenly smiles had habitually sat.

Theodora, that soft and seraphic being who but a short time since, rich in the charms of native grace and loveliness, had been the star

of a happy home, and the delight of a fond and admiring parent—that Theodora was now changed into the fearful semblance of a frantic being. Alas! such was the effect that a few moments had wrought, that the eyes of a fond parent would have in vain endeavoured to recognize his darling child. Feelings utterly foreign to the nature of Theodora, had now taken possession of the shattered fragments of a broken heart, once the shrine of hallowed and mental beauty; and those intelligent, soul-stirring features which nature had bestowed as the interpreters of soft sentiments and kindly feelings, now faithfully reflected the workings of impassioned and frenzied woe.

Alas! it is too often found that the gentle female heart, when rudely lacerated by the perfidy of man, is capable of being wrought, by a powerful sense of injury and intense anguish, to the utmost agony which the darker passions can display.

With irregular steps, which bespoke the confusion of her thoughts, she paced the silent chamber that gave back with hollow sound the

measure of her steps, while the vaulted passages of the palace echoed at intervals the deafening shouts that were heard from without.

But the fit of frenzied passion under which Theodora laboured was too violent to last. That fatal crisis was approaching, which generally terminates in the immediate accomplishment of a mad suggestion, or with calmness treasures up in silence some direful resolve. The moment had now arrived when the forces of the suffering victim were exhausted; she suddenly became composed; her mind appeared irrevocably fixed on some act of madness, and despair was stamped in the cold and unearthly expression which at that moment subdued her whole frame, and apparently subjected her existence to a new dominion.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Aguarda hasta que yo pase  
Si ha de caer una teja.

*Quevedo.*

Este misterio aparente  
Te voy, Señor a explicar.

*Zarate.*

WE think it almost time to retrace our steps, and revert to a character which played a conspicuous part at the beginning of this history. The reader, if not particularly deficient in memory, will perhaps remember a certain Don Rodrigo de Cespedes, who bustled not a little in one or two of the foregoing chapters, though he had the best excuse in the world for subsequently keeping out of the way. It is to him we must return; there-



fore, patient reader, suffer your attention to be diverted for a few moments from the interest of the present events, and resume your acquaintance with that most deserving and ill-used cavalier. And here, by the way, I may perhaps be allowed to indulge my spleen, by manifesting my extreme dislike to interruptions in general, for there is nothing so vexatious and mortifying as the unpleasant necessity to which an author is obliged to submit of breaking the thread of a narration when it begins to excite some interest,

It is a subject well worthy of notice, that the generality of readers should be of so inquisitive a temperament, that they cannot be induced to take in good part whatever they read, and rely implicitly on the good faith of the author for the correctness of what he advances. By this means, much time and paper might be saved, explanations would be useless, and works would be rendered more compact, and consequently less tedious, which we cannot but consider an infinite advantage to the literary world at large. However, we

must take matters as we find them, and as a circumstantial and satisfactory solution is expected by the reader to every incident enveloped somewhat in mystery, let us hasten to comply with the established custom : and now to return—

We left Don Rodrigo with his man Peregil, patiently waiting the leisure of their beasts, sighing, and cursing, and complaining by turns, for want of more suitable recreation. The night was dreary, and the spreading branches of the tree under which our friends had taken shelter, afforded but a meagre accommodation. If their lodgings were comfortless, the supper which they could expect was still more humble and hermit-like;—the bill of fare consisted of some green grass, which though abundantly supplied, presented a most provoking and unrelishing want of variety. We would not venture to determine whether the refinement of their palate stood in the way of their appetite, but it is nevertheless a fact that both master and man left the reverend father's mule and the *mesonero's* ass undisturbed pos-

sessors of the repast. The comforts of supper and rest being, therefore, denied to our wanderers, they resigned themselves to their unpleasant situation, and with the patience that necessity imposed upon them, awaited the approach of morning. Don Rodrigo in particular, being thoroughly impressed with the idea that his rival Gomez Arias had fallen in the encounter, was full of inquietude, and excessively desirous to penetrate further into the mountains to a place of security, where he might lie concealed until their safe return to Granada.

Accordingly, scarcely had the first blush of dawn shed a dubious ray over the still slumbering earth, than with much impatience Don Rodrigo hastened to try how far he might rely upon the complaisance of the mule. Peregil followed the example of his master, and having found that the temper of their beasts had been considerably improved by the abundance of their repast, they quickly mounted, and endeavouring to make up for the loss of time by a tolerably brisk pace,

they pursued their route towards the thickest and darkest part of the wilderness.

Two whole days did Don Rodrigo and his attendant continue to wander without making much progress, which may perhaps be chiefly attributed to the perverse disposition of the mule and her companion. Indeed the cavalier and his attendant wandered about much in the same manner that a knight-errant and his worthy squire might be expected to do, with this difference only, that the knight-errant would be eagerly seeking for adventures, whereas Don Rodrigo was equally solicitous to avoid them. The poor cavalier found himself in a most miserable plight; his revenge had been satisfied, but more generous sentiments now occupied his bosom. He reflected, with deep-felt remorse, that for the sake of redressing the fancied wrongs inflicted on him by an individual, he had deprived his country of one of its bravest defenders; then again, like most lovers under similar circumstances, he easily conjectured that the female who had evinced such an unequivocal aver-

sion to his addresses, would feel yet more repugnant to accept them, when offered by a man reeking with the blood of her favored lover.

These and many other reflections of the like nature continued to intrude upon his mind; for it is really a matter worthy of remark how very circumspect and thoughtful a man becomes, when by an undue neglect of those same qualifications he has brought himself into an uncomfortable and perilous predicament. They had by this time penetrated into those places which were under the dominion of the rebel Moors. This circumstance was therefore attended with the greatest danger, and consequently their anxiety and distrust became proportionably augmented as they advanced.

However, Don Rodrigo still bore with manly fortitude the unpleasant and dangerous turn which their affairs had taken, whilst the valet, since he could find no other resource, freely gave vent to his complaints.

"Señor," he cried, turning to his master,

“so may the Lord defend us, but we are every instant getting deeper into difficulties. Here are we flying from the clutches of alguazils, to fall into the grasp of the rebel Moors; and after all, unwelcome as the appearance of alguazils may be, I should feel very well contented at this moment to be under their special guardianship, rather than sustain the murderous aspect of these infidels. Nay, would to God that I were safely and comfortably incarcerated within the walls of the most obscure dungeon in Granada.”

“Let us then look for our way to Granada, and risk the worst from the friends of Don Lope,” said Don Rodrigo, who, though possessed of much personal courage and resolution, yet was aware these qualities would not avail him against the enemies which he was likely to encounter by proceeding.

“Aye, indeed,” replied Peregil, “let us find our way to Granada, and may the guardian angel conduct us safely thither.—Blessed be the virgin! for a man like myself, en-

dowed with a lively and poetical imagination, I may say, these wild places are exceedingly disagreeable, for they induce me to make strange metamorphoses: my fancy is continually upon the alert to transform every object into any thing save what it really is: at day-break I mistook my ass for an officer, and your mule for a Moor. Alas! we are alike, my honored master; for you, Don Rodrigo, when in a poetic and loving mood, are ever disposed to convert cheeks into roses, and lips into coral, and to find pearls where others only see teeth. Now, Señor, by a similar process, when a fit of poetry and fear comes upon me, I feel marvellously inclined to convert all objects that come before my view—let alone my ass and your mule—flocks of sheep, flights of crows, stray cows, and barking dogs, into so many ruffian-looking and hideous Moors; and, moreover, I am fully persuaded that my poetry is not a whit more extravagant than yours."

Don Rodrigo, harassed with the combined inconveniences of hunger and fatigue, paid

little attention to the absurdities upon which his timorous valet was commenting; but Peregil, emboldened by the passive forbearance of his master, continued in a higher key :—

“A plague on all lovers, say I; a plague on lovers who for a woman, one solitary woman, when there is so abundant a choice of such commodity in Spain, can be stimulated to cut the throats of each other, risk all sorts of perils, and undergo all the miseries that can afflict human nature. Fye! fye——”

“Peace, thou wretch!” exclaimed Don Rodrigo; “profane not with thy foul remarks and scurrilous rebukes, that tender sentiment which thine own gross and brutish disposition is neither competent to appreciate nor enjoy.”

“And most humbly,” returned Peregil, “do I thank providence for having given me a heart withal so brutish and so gross, since those refined pleasures and feelings which are likely to lead a man into mischief, are in direct opposition to my taste. Now tell me, my honored master, is there any law, either



human or divine, which ordains that, because you most desperately love Leonor de Aguilar, and Leonor de Aguilar as cordially dislikes you, I, who am by no means a party concerned in this love or hatred, ought to be exposed to all the united miseries of hunger and thirst, fatigue, dangers, and even death?"

Don Rodrigo, occupied with very different subjects, heard not the flippant observations of his servant, when suddenly, as they were approaching the skirts of a wood, his reflections and the valet's impertinent loquacity were cut short by the unwelcome appearance of a party of the strolling rebels. They sprung eagerly from their concealment, and in a moment stood before Don Rodrigo and his attendant, bearing on their countenances the marks of their revengeful disposition, and the savage pleasure of meeting with a devoted prey.

"Stand!" fiercely cried one of the ruffians.

Don Rodrigo made no reply, but gallantly drew his weapon, and prepared for a resolute defence.

“What! base Christian! darest thou provoke our anger? Thy life shall pay for the temerity.”

“The payment,” returned Don Rodrigo, “shall not, at least, be easily extorted.”

At this the Moors rushed upon the unfortunate cavalier, who though aware of the impossibility of making any successful resistance against so many enemies, defended himself bravely and undauntedly, while Peregil fled with equal speed and terror. The combat could not be long protracted. Don Rodrigo fell covered with wounds and exhausted from the loss of blood, uttering a faint murmuring complaint on his unlucky fate and disastrous love. The ferocious Moors raised his body from the ground, and as it was the custom with those desperate men when a Christian unfortunately fell into their power, they immediately hung it on a tree. There they left him, and shortly after chance led them to the spot where the hapless Theodora slept, forsaken by her unprincipled betrayer.

The flight of Roque, and the remarks she had heard from the Moors on the night she was taken, led that unfortunate girl to believe that it was her lover who had fallen a victim to the cruelty of those barbarians. Thus she bitterly deplored the supposed death of him who was at the very moment accomplishing the blackest deed of ingratitude.

Meanwhile Roque, instigated by fear, and retreating on the scent of safety, shortly overtook his master, who was not a little surprised and alarmed at the discomposure of his plans, when he perceived his valet appear unaccompanied by Theodora.

"Where is Theodora?" demanded he hastily.

"I don't know," sullenly responded Roque; "probably in Heaven by this time."

"What mean you, villain? didst thou forget my orders?"

"Certainly not, but when I was about to put them in practice, some thousands of most desperate Moors came just in time to pre-

vent my laudable intentions. At first, bearing in mind the gallant master whom I had the honor to serve, it was my determination to fight the unbelieving rascals; but upon second thoughts, I discovered it would be more prudent to yield to necessity, and since it was not in my power to save the young lady from falling into their hands, I considered it laudable to disappoint the rebels of one prisoner at least, whom they might perhaps estimate as the most important of the two; and so, instead of making use of my arms, I had recourse to my legs, which members, on more than one occasion, I have found to be the most serviceable part of my poor self."

Gomez Arias mused for a moment upon the narration of his attendant, as though calculating the probable consequences of the event. Even in spite of the uneasiness which he pretended for the fate of Theodora, he could hardly disguise from himself a species of latent satisfaction. The event removed from his way the only impediment by which his ambitious designs could be thwarted. Theodora,

in the power of the Moors, would be even more secure than in a convent, and Gomez Arias, without troubling himself about the probable fate to which his lovely and too confiding victim was exposed, continued his journey to Granada, drowning the recollection of his misconduct in the glittering prospect that was now opening before him.

The next day he met with the glorious army of Don Alonso de Aguilar, by whom he was welcomed with a friendly and parental solicitude. He had the good fortune to act a conspicuous part in the encounter which El Feri sustained at Gergal, and which ultimately led to the complete overthrow of the Moors at Alhacen, and the destruction of that town. Don Lope proceeded to Granada with the prisoners, and to offer his services to the queen upon his arrival. He soon found in the resources of his mind specious pretexts to cover his long absence from Granada, and his apparent dilatory conduct, notwithstanding the notification of his safety sent to him by his future bride. But Leonor de

Aguilar, though proud and lofty, was still a woman in her affections, and willingly received the most feeble excuses, when urged as they now were by the eloquence of a favored lover.

Thus Gomez Arias, whilst his victim was abandoned to all the horrors of her fate, whilst her venerable father drank deep the bitter draught of affliction—Gomez Arias, the heartless perpetrator of so much misery, now fondly rioted in the anticipated pleasures of his approaching nuptials, and the splendid honors that awaited his union with Leonor de Aguilar.

## CHAPTER IX.

Ecco l'ora—Nel sonno immerso giace  
 —————E gli occhi all'alma luce  
 Non aprirà più mai? Questa mia destra  
 Per farai or sta del suo morir ministra?....

*Alfieri.*

*Est-ce une illusion soudaine  
 Qui trompe mes regards surpris?  
 Est-ce un songe dont l'ombre vaine  
 Trouble mes timides esprits?*

*J. B. Rousseau.*

THE night was far advanced, and the numerous guests whom the hospitality of Don Alonso had summoned together, began to retire from the joyous scene of revelry and feasting. The noisy pleasure was wearing fast away, and those antique halls no longer echoed with the boisterous mirth of so many joyous hearts; for in Aguilar's palace that night every heart was happy,—every heart

save one,—one which, desolate and solitary amidst this world of rejoicing, was a prey to the canker sorrow that had fastened upon its core.

But now the convivial assemblage had retired, and the banquetting hall was left to the undisputed dominion of silence and lonely repose. No longer ornamented with all the panoplies of war, and the verdant and perfumed spoils of the garden, those glittering scenes which dazzled the eyes and benumbed the senses, were now no longer resplendent, but wore that chilling aspect which imparts to the mind a painful sensation of melancholy and regret. Upon the long tables still remained the scattered fragments, remnants of the banquet. Here the sumptuous display of the looms of Valencia were stained with the waste of racy and highly flavoured wines, and there broken goblets and ornaments of curious workmanship were flung around in the reckless excitement of the revellers. The lamps were out, and the few that still glimmered in the sockets served but to heighten with their



fitful and scanty light the deserted and gloomy appearance of the scene.

Gomez Arias had retired to his chamber in a transport of delight; the most pleasing reveries thronged upon his mind, and as he paced the silent apartment, he inwardly congratulated himself on the near completion of all his hopes—the speedy enjoyment of his fondest wishes. In this ferment of expectation, not a single thought obtruded to damp his ardour, or throw a partial shadow over so bright a picture. Every thing around him contributed to his felicity,—for alas! he did not see the sorrow that was busily destroying those charms by whose power he had been once captivated: nor did he hear the wailings of that voice designed by nature to convey the softest tones of innocence and delight. No, Gomez Arias had no thought for his unhappy victim—far, far was he from surmising that she was at that moment beneath the same roof.

In this delightful mood, Don Lope threw himself upon the superb couch, to pass the

night in the luxurious vision of his approaching happiness. The silence was awful ! the dull bluish glare of a solitary lamp flung around the dim splendor of the chamber a charm of melancholy tranquillity; the rich arabesque ornaments, the gorgeous tapestry, on which the heroes of other times stood frowning in gloomy repose, were now partially obscured in solemn shadows that might have imparted a sensation of superstitious awe. More faintly now gleamed the expiring light of the lamp, which looked a cold unearthly beam, colourless and fixed, save when the chilling draft of nightly air found its way through a crevice of the ponderous casement, and animated the languid flame with a dull and sickly motion.

Hushed is every sound, when lo ! the door gently opens, and a white figure moves slowly forwards. It is a female form, and the lamp that still glimmered in the room, and another which the nocturnal visitor carried in her hand, revealed a picture which might well chill the heart of the most hardened :—it was

a female in the first stage of youth, and in whose lineaments could yet be traced the fading remains of beauty. She grasped a dagger, and she came ready steeled for crime. Murder!—the blackest deed of human depravity, revolting to the senses even when instigated by the revengéful passions of man, but in a young and tender female, unnatural, and full of horror. The figure paused, and cast around a dubious and uncertain glance; her whole frame trembled, and the weapon in her hand seemed ready to forsake its grasp. Alas! those irresolute motions, bespoke her nature: it was woman, woman armed for crime, but woman still. With noiseless step she advanced towards the couch; she reached the spot, and gazed with fixed earnestness on the sleeping Gomez Arias; a thousand gloomy thoughts expand on her pallid brow; her dark eyes gleam with the flame of revége; her livid lips curl with the bitter smile of despair! With difficulty she draws the oppressive breath, and violently shakes the hand that holds the shining weapon. 'Tis a demon that

directs her every motion, and imparts to that melancholy and fading picture of youth and beauty, the darkest hues of the fierce and frenzied passions.

But the gust of rage is passed. She looks again upon the sleeper, and a deadly calm overspreads those features but lately fraught with convulsive passion. Fixed to the ground, she now appeared like an inanimate statue, and apparently forgetful of the dire purpose that had brought her to the spot. Poor Theodora!—child of misfortune!—victim of that intensity of feeling which nature seemed to have designed for thy bane and ruin; thou wert guilty but of a single error, and is then that error so severely to be visited! That heaven which made thee pure, and beautiful, and lovely, did it intend that thou shouldst experience all the horrors of the most malignant fate, as a counterpoise for the possession of so many attractions; or was it only to be exemplified as a warning to others, who, like thee, might be rich in beauty and gracefulness, of the dangers which these gifts bring in their train!

---

Theodora had been guilty of one crime ; if, alas ! that deserves the name of crime which is the genuine offspring of the sincerest heart. She had loved, and loved with all the enthusiasm of devoted affection. She had been generous, and unsuspecting, and for this she was betrayed and abandoned. Her injuries had so far wrought upon her distempered brain, that she was now about to commit a crime, for which she would be cursed, despised, and perhaps brought to an ignominious end.

Theodora remained a short time in a doubtful mood, and a heavenly spirit seemed to struggle with the malignant fiend that instigated her. She held the lamp in her trembling hand over the sleeping form of her lover, and by the sickly light she discovered his features as if inspired by some happy dream. His breath came thick upon her face, as she bent over the couch. Smiles were upon his lips, and a gentle motion shook his frame.

“ He loves her ! ” groaned the despairing Theodora, — “ he loves her dearly, and I am come to — ”

At this moment the deep toned bell of the palace sounded the hour, and interrupted her dreadful sentence. Solemnly the peal rung through the place like the death-knell of the perjured lover; but he, unconscious of his impending fate, slept securely and dreamt of love and happiness. For now his lips move, and in the broken articulation of deep but pleasing sighs, the name of her who occupied his mind, burst from his swelling bosom. It was the name of Leonor; the baneful sound went piercing to Theodora's heart, and roused all the furies that held dominion there. The kindly feelings which had returned, now withered fast away. She starts with frenzy; she grows paler, and revenge alone prevails; her bosom rises and falls with fearful emotion; wildly her eyes roll. She resolutely grasps the dagger; the moment is arrived; one blow, and the despoiler of her happiness would cease to exist: she fiercely raised her arm, but at the instant all her strength withered: nerveless she dropped the weapon from her powerless hand: no! she could not strike; for she was a woman maddened by deep injuries,

but she still loved her betrayer, and the fountain of her gentle nature again bedewed her heart. She could not strike the man who had, without remorse, inflicted on her the pangs of a thousand deaths: she smiles in bitterness, and hangs over the couch of her unconscious lover, her clustering hair loosely flowing over the pillow; a piteous sigh escapes her, and, bending lower, she kisses the lips that had betrayed her.

Gomez Arias awakes.—Is this a vision? Surely a phantom mocks his sight; the spectre of *her* he had forsaken stands before him: it is indeed the image of Theodora,—but, alas! how changed! A short time only had flown since last he saw her, and yet so altered was that form, that were it not for a consciousness of guilt, with difficulty he would have recognised her whom he had once idolized. Gomez Arias thrilled as he gazed on the nocturnal visitor; in her pale features could be traced no sympathy with life; a clammy dampness bedewed her brows; a chilling apathy sat upon her countenance. One of her hands

now mechanically fell on the feverish breast of Don Lope, and the cold, cold touch imparted a thrill of horror.

In speechless amazement Gomez Arias looked on the mournful figure, and in her glazed eye he beheld one large tear, that, overwhelming the eye-lid, dropt heavily on his hand. It was the tear of anguish, and the drop, as it moistened the hand of Gomez Arias, awakened in his heart a sad remembrance of violated love and truth.

The first impression of astonishment had now subsided, and Don Lope, in a broken voice, exclaimed—"Theodora! Heavens! is it thou?"

"Yes," she answered, gloomily, "it is the lost, the wretched Theodora, once the object of thy adoration, and now thy curse. But tremble not; the dreadful moment is passed, and I cannot harm thee; for though thou hast cruelly betrayed me, thou art *still* Gomez Arias."

"How came you hither?" demanded Don Lope, with emotion: "What was your intention?"



“Behold!” she replied, with a bitter smile, pointing to the dagger that shone on the ground; “I came to kill thee—I came to deal out a reward but little adequate to the pangs to which thy treachery has eternally condemned me. Oh! Lope! Lope! why didst thou not take from me this wretched life when I was no longer dear to thy heart? I should then have been happy!—Thou didst not—but cruelly left me to the mercy of strangers, when I had *none* to look upon in life but thee.”

All the feelings of an injured, yet fond woman now flowed uncontrolled over that heart where the stormy passions had raged before. She sobbed convulsively, and a shower of tears relieved her breaking bosom. Her weeping countenance was upon her lover’s breast, and as he contemplated her deep anguish, and the wreck of those charms which, but for him, had still shone in their native grace, a ray of pity dawned upon his heart, callous as he was. There was something so peculiarly distressing in the situation

of the unfortunate girl, that all the glowing considerations of ambition faded for a moment from his view, and his senses were alive only to more humane sentiments.

Gomez Arias no longer loved Theodora; but still when he saw the extent of her misery, and felt her warm tears inundating his bosom, pity partially supplied the place of his departed affection. He took the passive hand of Theodora, and gently pressed it between his own—and happy—happy was at that moment his innocent victim at this solitary mark of kindness. It was like a healing balm to her lacerated soul; but too soon she discovered—for what, alas! can escape the acute penetration of a loving woman—she soon discovered that pity alone suggested the consoling token—pity which might alike have been excited by any other object of distress; and, oh! how little does the sedate voice of pity satisfy the craving bosom of one who had such claims to command unbounded love!

---

Theodora fixed her eyes on her lover, not in anger but in sorrow, and, in a thrilling and piteous voice, she exclaimed—

“I know you no longer love me; but, Oh! heavens! have I deserved this from you, Lope? Your vows I will not recall, for who can forget them? They are deeply engraven in my heart, and I believed them true,—I loved you, Lope—Oh! I loved you as never woman loved before, and how was such affection requited? Alas! had I suffered the most terrible of deaths, it had been kind compared with thy desertion.”

“Yes, Theodora,” said Gomez Arias, “your reproaches are just; for well I deserve the most bitter that language can invent; but I was compelled to that necessity by obligations so imperative, so sacred, that they may serve to explain, and perhaps, in some measure, to extenuate the disgrace, which my heart tells me I have so justly incurred.”

“Oh!” cried Theodora, “could aught in earth oblige you to abandon one linked to you by the dearest of ties?”

"It was the consequence of former guilt," replied Don Lope. "Theodora, I will deal frankly by you,—nay tremble not at the intelligence which I must disclose, for it is now imperiously required.—Curse me, Theodora," he then added with emotion, "curse the man who has accomplished your ruin. When I courted your affections; when I sought your innocent caresses, then—then, alas! I was the betrayer; for it was then that I deceived your unsuspecting heart."

"Oh! Heavens!" shrieked Theodora, "you never loved me then!"

"Yes, I adored you,—I loved you truly,—passionately, but it was my very love that wrought this misery. I had no strength to reveal the terrible secret; I became selfish and ungenerous; for when I breathed to your innocent ear the vows of everlasting affection, when you repaid my profession with undisguised, pure, and disinterested love, even at that time, my hand, my faith, were sacredly pledged to another."

Theodora hid her face in agony, and wrung

her hands in despair, but she could not speak; her heart was full even to breaking, and it was with a severe struggle that she faintly pronounced "Leonor!"

"It is too true," replied Gomez Arias. Previous to my arrival at Guadix, and my acquaintance with you, my honor was bound to the daughter of Aguilar by indissoluble ties; we were betrothed, and on the point of being united, when an untoward accident drove me from Granada to avoid the vengeance of the friends of my discarded rival Don Rodrigo de Cespedes. Misguided by the fever of passion, I forgot my sacred obligations to Leonor. You have already but too dreadfully suffered, and a repetition of such scenes must necessarily increase the anguish of your situation."

This recital threw the hapless daughter of Monteblanco into that exquisite agony which falls to the lot of woman alone to feel: for man, far happier in the diversity of his pursuits; less susceptible in the refinement of sensibility; more divided in his intercourse

with society, can never experience that poignancy of feeling excited by shame and disappointed love, which exert their baneful influence over the heart of forsaken woman !

Theodora answered not her lover ; there was something so atrocious in his recital, that in spite of the palliation which a fond woman, even when most injured, is anxious to find for the man who has wronged her, she could not cast a shade over the glaring colours in which Don Lope's treachery was depicted : she recoiled from him with a feeling of apprehension, and her countenance assumed a deadly hue as she fearfully exclaimed—

“And you left me then to perish in the mountains?”

“No, Theodora,” eagerly cried Gomez Arias; “no ! such intentions never entered my mind ; of that at least I am innocent : it was my purpose to have placed you in a convent, and I availed myself of your sleep to spare you the pangs of a separation. Having instructed Roque how to act, I proceeded onwards to make the necessary arrangements

for your reception in the religious asylum the Moors surprised you ; Roque fled : of the rest I am ignorant, and how I find you here is more than imagination can conceive."

"I came," said Theodora, bitterly—"I came to be a witness of your joyful wedding : it is to be celebrated to-morrow, and I am yet in time."

There was something evil-boding in the tone of these words, and an involuntary chill crept over Gomez Arias as he fixed his eyes on the sufferer.

"Yes," she continued, "it is necessary that the ceremony should be attended at least by one of your victims—the triumph of Leonor will then be more brilliant; and I," she added in a faltering tone, "I shall also enjoy one satisfaction——"

Struck with horror, no less at these words than at the manner in which they were delivered, Gomez Arias looked wildly on Theodora ; but was unable for some time to give utterance to his thoughts.

"My poor life," continued Theodora, "must

always be an obstacle to your happiness, and it is meet I should make the sacrifice at the foot of the altar, at the time of your union with the choice of your heart."

Don Lope was fixed in deep abstraction ; a thousand thoughts rushed across his fevered brain ; he raised himself from the couch ; a copious suffusion bathed his distended brows, and every thing bespoke the dreadful conflict of his feelings. He saw all his prospects of grandeur fall like the baseless structure of a dream : on the point of snatching the golden treasure, he was arrested as effectually as if by the hand of death. Perplexed with the most distracting thoughts and boisterous passions, he for a time appeared even unconscious of the form that came to nip his hopes in their blossom : but soon a light seemed to illumine his overclouded imagination, and his brow brightened as if actuated by a sudden resolution.

"Theodora," he said, with a solemn and energetic tone—"Theodora, I will no longer dissemble with you ; I have been cruel,



barbarous as never man was before: yes, to-morrow I am to be united to Spain's proudest daughter, and all that ambition and glory can offer in dazzling perspective to the ardent imagination of man, all, all is to be fulfilled. But, alas! Theodora, I cannot endure your distress; your tears, your anguish rend my heart, and awaken that affection which was never completely extinguished. Dared I but hope for your forgiveness, how willingly would I make the sacrifice of these glittering bubbles, and return to that path where alone I can find peace and happiness. Theodora!" he continued after a pause, "can you forgive me?"

This appeal was made in a tone so subdued and pathetic, that a conviction of its sincerity was readily admitted by the sorrowing Theodora.

"Forgive thee!" she exclaimed, in a voice thrilling with emotion, whilst a rich glow of animation overspread those pale features: "Forgive thee, Lope! Can Theodora deny you!"

Earnestly she raised her clasped hands to Heaven, and, in the genuine abandonment of an enthusiastic heart,

“ Oh God !” she exclaimed, “ thy mercies are boundless. Dear Lope !” she continued, “ can I do otherwise than forgive you !” and the tear of joy glistened in her eye. “ Your returning love will repay me for all the agonies I have undergone. And now you must forgive me—for did I not even now come armed for your destruction ! Oh, horror ! I came to murder thee—in this spot—sleeping as thou wast ! But ah ! pardon me ; I was then a poor distracted woman, a despairing maniac, and——”

“ Stay, my Theodora ; reproach not thyself for an act of which I was the cause ; it was a fate that I too justly merited. But no more of that. Listen, dear girl, and follow my injunctions, as upon their strict observance depends our future happiness. To-morrow night I will conduct you to your poor deserted parent: together at his knees we will implore forgiveness. He will not be invul

---

nerable to the tears and supplications of his child; and I will forget the wild dreams that have so long tyrannised over my kinder feelings, to fix all my thoughts upon love and Theodora. To the happy termination of these designs, however, you must be willing to pay attention to my instructions."

"I will do all!" emphatically cried Theodora.

"Well," returned Gomez Arias, "take heed that thou keepest silence with reference to our meeting and resolves;—closed in thy chamber, thou must appear an uninterested stranger to whatever may be proceeding without. It will require the utmost delicacy and ability to disclose my determination to the proud Aguilers, when the arrangements with them are so far advanced. It is an insult they will never tamely brook, and all my policy will be necessary to defer, at least for some time, the terrible explosion of their indignation."

"Oh, Lope," exclaimed the fond girl, in a transport of tenderness, "I will—I will obey

you faithfully! Your slightest wish shall be to me a law."

The tide of rapturous feeling overflowed her heart. Intoxicated with happiness, she threw herself beside the couch, fervently clasped the passive hands of her repentant lover, and tenderly pressed them to her throbbing bosom. But those transports beat coldly responsive within the breast of Don Lope; for pity and a sense of duty are but poor and inadequate substitutes for the glow of passion. Still, however, recollection brought to his fancy raptures past and endearments since flown; and memory perhaps made him cherish the present by vividly recalling the past. But it was like the melancholy regretful pleasure which is experienced by one who revisits the scenes of his childhood. He may indulge in the recollection of those departed joys, but his mind is estranged by other feelings, and can no longer enjoy those pleasures which formerly constituted his happiness.

The morning was now fast approaching,

and a separation became indispensable.—  
Theodora made a hasty recital of her adventures and withdrew, replete with returning joy; for she had passed a few moments with greater delight than perhaps she could ever again experience in this world—those blissful moments when hearts severed by destiny, or alienated by misfortune, again unite in the genuine bonds of revived affection.

## CHAPTER X.

Oh! what a jewel is a woman excellent!

*Beaumont.*

Mais qu'aisément l'amour croit tout ce qu'il souhaite!

*Racine.*

I humbly offer my advice (but still  
Under correction), I hope I shall not  
Incur your high displeasure.

*Massinger.*

OH, Woman! lovely devoted Woman! Of what mysterious particles could nature have formed so strange a being—made up, as it were, of contradictions, and yet deriving from that very inconsistency its principal attraction. Uncertain and wavering, but amiable in that very weakness. When impelled by affection or smarting under highly excited feelings of injury, thou art capable of the most noble enthusiasm, or the darkest exhi-

bitions of passion. Man, proudly arrogating to himself a despotic sway over the higher walks of intellect, and the wild and luxuriant fields of imagination, has left thee undisputed sovereign of the empire of the heart! He is often happy to avail himself of that more delicate discrimination, an instinctive feeling with which nature has gifted thee, though jealous of permitting thee to share in his power. Woman! thou wert born to grace and smooth the rugged path of life; the advancement of one endearing sentiment is the prized object of thy existence, and its successful termination thy reward. Debarred by nature and education from the glittering pursuits of ambition; incapable by the delicacy of thy frame, and the softness of thy nature, of following the rude pastimes, and participating in the laborious and dangerous avocations of man, thy whole being is wrapt in the charm of that one feeling—love! A feeling the most congenial to thy nature—blissful in the possession, and often but too fatal in its effects. Man seeks thee as a

friend, to treat thee like an enemy. Thou lovest—he triumphs! and then he spurns thee because thou hast been kind. Base and degrading contradiction of human nature!—that because man is endowed with greater powers of attack, than woman has strength to resist, in the unequal strife, odium and shame should attach to the victim, whilst the betrayer acquires a false lustre from his unmanly triumph!

But Woman! such is the angelic essence of thy being, that while capable of feeling with poignancy the shafts of ingratitude and neglect, thou art still ready to pardon, and ever disposed to forget, when repentance makes an appeal to thy compassionate and gentle heart.

Such a woman was Theodora!—After having borne the extremity of sorrows, which seemed to surpass the strength of human forbearance, instigated by madness and despair, she had grasped the dagger in that soft hand little adequate for a deed so dark; like the midnight assassin, she had entered



the chamber of her wronger, bent upon the commission of crime. But the sight of him who was once so dear disarms her—she cannot accomplish the deed of guilt, and the sudden repentance of her betrayer, like a potent charm, soon dispels the evil passions to which she was a prey. Only a few words of comfort had Gomez Arias spoken before the voice of sorrow was hushed in her heart. Nay, the man who had wounded her so deeply, was endeared by his very cruelty; for, alas! Theodora felt she loved him *now* more tenderly than ever.

She had forgotten the former treachery of her lover, and, incapable of anticipating the possibility of a renewal, she retired to her chamber to revel in her happiness, and await the coming of the day in anxious expectation.

In the meantime, Gomez Arias was pacing his apartment in the utmost impatience and agitation. Scarcely had Theodora withdrawn and the first impulse of pity subsided, than the sense of the danger to which his

ambitious projects were exposed, rushed upon his imagination, and silenced every other consideration, save that of their accomplishment. Morning came, and still found Don Lope measuring his chamber with an irregularity of step that well bespoke the disorder of his feelings. Sometimes he paused and pondered upon an idea which seemed to offer him security, and then he rejected it as unavailable. Then he muttered half broken sentences, and then again suddenly composed himself into a saturnine tranquillity. After this he raved like a madman, and bitterly cursed the unfortunate Theodora as an insurmountable impediment to his views; forgetting that it was by the guilty indulgence of his own unworthy passions that he was now entangled in the intricate perplexities which surrounded him. The ill-fated victim of his guilt, fortunately for her short-lived happiness, heard not the ungenerous reproach. Alas! she was fondly indulging in the supposed kindness of her lover, and longing to clasp him in her arms;

whilst the object of her endearment was at the same moment ungenerously contriving how to disengage himself from that embrace.

His present deceit was the natural consequence of the system he had adopted. To relinquish the brilliant prospects which presented themselves to his ambition, merely to listen to the voice of justice, and give redress to the injured, was too great an effort, encompassed as he was with the thousand conflicting passions that silenced the murmurs of neglected duty. His aversion to Theodora now acquired additional strength from the dilemma in which he was involved. He had never for a moment contemplated breaking his engagements with Leonor; he was unwilling even to calculate upon a possibility of such an event, for his honor and pride were both too deeply interested; yet it was of the most urgent necessity to delay the ceremony, and how to conciliate these matters was the source of his present uneasiness. What pretext could he assign plausible enough to justify so extraordinary a resolution?

A thousand plans suggested themselves, all of which he discarded as unavailable: he was apprehensive that night would surprise him before any arrangements could be entered into with regard to Theodora; and to attempt any coercive means of conveying her from the palace of Don Alonso would be madness. At all events he must avoid any interview with Theodora whilst his conduct might be subjected to observation; for at such a time the attention of all the household would naturally be directed towards him.

In this perplexity he was surprised by his faithful valet, who came in the morning, according to custom, to receive his orders. Roque entered, and was not a little surprised to observe his master's abstraction.

"Good morrow to you, Señor," said he, making an humble bow, and advancing towards the musing cavalier; but Don Lope made no answer whatever, nor did he take the slightest notice of his salutation.

"There!" continued Roque. "*Dios me*

*bendiga!* \* my precious master is in a most thoughtful mood. I had always the power of rousing him from his meditations, but now they appear too powerful for my humble abilities. Don Lope," he proceeded in a louder key, "good morning to your honor," and he accompanied this Christian-like wish with as many noisy demonstrations as were compatible with good order.

"Oh!" cried Don Lope, suddenly starting, "is it you, Roque?"

"The same, Sir, at your service," replied the obsequious valet.

"Curse thee!" returned his master, "why makest thou that noise?"

"Thank you, dear master, that is a most amiable morning salutation; it augurs well too on a wedding-day."

"Pshaw! my wedding-day!" cried Gomez Arias, impatiently; and he again relapsed into his train of reflection.

"Eh?" ejaculated Roque; "I wonder what is in the wind now; all is not right, I

\* God bless me.

perceive. Señor Don Lope, may I so far intrude on your most important meditations, as to demand what has sent your wits a wool-gathering so early in the morning: surely your dreams have not been unpleasant—for my part I cannot bear terrible dreams; they are ominous, particularly on the eve of a wedding——”

“Hold thy foolish chatter,” interrupted Gomez Arias; “it is not a dream that troubles me, but a reality, a most mortifying reality. Roque,” he then added in a more familiar tone, “I am involved in a labyrinth from which it will be no easy matter to extricate myself.”

“I am very sorry, good Señor; for my part, I can very well conceive that a prudent man has cogent reasons to ponder and reflect more than a philosopher, when he is on the point of being entangled in the labyrinth of matrimony. Yes, Sir, I allow it is a most dangerous experiment: it is a voyage menaced with all sorts of foul weather, and surrounded with shoals, quicksands, and rocks, so that——”

"Roque, a truce with your cursed metaphors," cried Don Lope, "or I'll blow such a storm about thine ears, as to surpass all description."

"Sir," replied the valet, "if you dislike storms, I have not the smallest affection for them, so I'll even hold my tongue."

"Roque," said Gomez Arias after a moment's silence, "I am threatened with the loss of the rich treasure which I have so long and so arduously toiled to obtain."

"Treasure, Señor!" cried the wondering valet. "*Cuerpo de Cristo!* Treasure! Be pleased to explain: I was not aware that you expected a rich treasure; from what quarter is it to come? My dear, dear master, I suppose you will then pay me all my vails."

"Here's an infamous sinner!" exclaimed Gomez Arias; "an unconscionable dog, to be talking of money and filthy wages when his master is labouring under the most perplexing dilemma in which ever mortal man was placed. Roque, I do not see what prevents me from shaking thy rascally form to atoms."

Don Lope, in his anger, made a step in advance, while Roque prudently made one in retrograde.

"Don Lope," cried the retreating valet, "as I hope for salvation, it is not my wish to offend: you appear in a terrible passion, and there is certainly some mystery at the bottom: something preys upon your mind, and if you would make me acquainted with it, perhaps I might devise a remedy for the evil."

"You cannot, Roque," returned his master, somewhat composed; "you cannot contrive to defer this wedding!"

"*Virgin del tremedal*," ejaculated Roque, crossing himself, "and is it come to this at last? So you have discovered some imperfection in the beauteous bride; some failing of which you were ignorant; better before the ceremony than after. But it would be a marvellous pity to spoil the feast, after the splendid preparations made to celebrate it with the state and decorum to which it is entitled. Lord bless us! a curious business we should make of it. But never mind; perhaps it is for the best after all."



"Now, Roque, hast thou finished? Who in the name of *Satanas*\* can hear with patience thy everlasting foolery! I do not intend to postpone the celebration of the wedding from inclination, but because I am so compelled by unavoidable circumstances."

"What say you, dear master? surely nothing has happened."

"Yes, something, and most extraordinary; thou wilt be astonished at what I have to relate, Roque."

"Proceed, Señor; hold me not in suspense, and I can verily assure you, that nothing is wonderful to me."

"I have seen," continued Gomez Arias, in a solemn tone,—“I have seen Theodora!”

"Theodora!" echoed Roque, affecting surprise. "Seen Theodora! in your dreams, perchance, my good master."

"I have seen her," returned Don Lope, "as plainly as I now see thee. Nay, I have spoken with her."

"Where, Señor Don Lope?"

"Here, in this very apartment."

\* Satan.

"You astonish me," proceeded Roque, "and yet I cannot say it is so very strange, neither; for I, myself, saw her—that is, I dreamt I saw her—and dreams, you know, my honored master, are often the precursors of realities."

"Enough," cried Gomez Arias; "we must now think on the means of averting the danger."

"The danger!" quoth Roque; "in the name of *San Pablo*, what danger do you apprehend?"

"Oh, Roque! I am threatened with the worst of evils."

"*Virgen Santa!* what say you, Señor?"

"Theodora expects me to relinquish the intended wedding, and depart hence with her, or she will expose me at the very altar."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Roque! "what, is not the gentle lady already tired of rambling? Good God! I should have imagined she had had too many mountain adventures to be longing to take another trip with you."

"Roque," said Gomez Arias, "we must remove this girl out of our way."

"Our way!" quoth the man of confidence—

"our way, my good Señor? she is not in my way, by any means."

"No, buffoonery, Sirrah! you have chosen ill your time for jesting. Now listen, varlet. This Theodora must be disposed of; the urgency of this measure is obvious."

"Very obvious," responded Roque.

"The sooner the better," continued Don Lope, musing.

"Exactly," rejoined the valet.

"And how this is to be accomplished," muttered Gomez Arias, "without exciting suspicion among the household, I cannot conceive."

"Nor I," returned Roque.

"It is really the most distressing circumstance," continued his master.

"Uncommonly distressing," echoed the confidant.

"Of course," proceeded Don Lope, "I must employ stratagem; the wedding must be delayed; I will boldly accost Don Alonso. I shall merely demand one day, and in that short interval, every thing must be arranged, some way or other."

Don Lope uttered this last observation with the most imperturbable *sang froid*, and the conscientious Roque, wisely reflecting that under the head of disposing of cumbersome damsels, there were some ways not altogether in accordance with the dictates of conscience, ventured to observe——

“ Pardon me, Don Lope, but I hope that in the premeditated disposal of this troublesome commodity, you do not mean to use any violence; for the Lord knows that the poor lady is already but too deserving of compassion.”

“ Thou art an impertinent, officious fool, Roque.”

“ That may be,” coolly retorted the valet.  
“ But be pleased to observe, that from the very commencement of this adventure—from the very first moment that you poured your sweet poison into the ear of this innocent young creature, I strenuously set my face against such proceeding; something whispered to me, that it would ultimately be productive of the most disastrous results: time will show that forebodings are sometimes to be credited. So be pleased to recollect, Señor,

how often I remonstrated with you about this melancholy business."

"I do, Roque; and I suppose you likewise recollect what you gained by your eloquent remonstrances?"

"Oh, Sir," replied Roque, "favors they were, so deeply engraven, that it would be difficult to efface them from my remembrance."

"Well," continued Gomez Arias, "know, Roque, that I am at this time just in a humor to treat you with a renewal of such like favors, if you do not immediately put a stop to your droning and most impertinent reminiscences. I do not ask your condolence and regret for what is past, for that now cannot be remedied. I want thy shrewdness and invention to aid me in the present emergency. Violence I will not employ, so let your scruples be at rest. I must now see Don Alonso, and prepare the way for ulterior plans. Roque, I recommend thee to preserve a strict silence on the matter, if thou art not entirely disgusted with life. Now gone,—

and meet me two hours hence at the *Plaza Nueva*."

Roque made a low bow of assent and withdrew; whilst Gomez Arias, assuming as much resolution as the importance of the occasion demanded, left his apartment to meet Don Alonso de Aguilar. Scarcely had he quitted his chamber than he beheld, with no little emotion, the bustle and activity which prevailed over the whole palace, on account of the expected festivities of the day. Here were maids, in fine attire, tripping gaily along, simpering and smiling, and all good nature and amiability. There ran servants in gorgeous dresses parading about in their respective departments, and assuming importance in proportion to the degree of responsibility which they were to take at the festival; and handsome pages were seen carrying bridal favors in large and beautiful silver salvers. Then came a crowd of friends, eagerly making their way to Gomez Arias, and offering their congratulation to the happy bridegroom; while the bridegroom, so congratulated, bore on

his countenance an expression of any thing but happiness. Nor were these tokens of kindness confined alone to friends; for the fame of the wedding had attracted a proportionate number of hungry bards and minstrels who came at an early hour to greet the bridegroom with their songs and rhapsodies, whilst Don Lope, as it may well be supposed, responded to their love ditties and congratulations with most hearty curses.

He traversed the long galleries and spacious halls of the palace, already besieged with numerous visitors—some attracted by the splendor of the festival, and others by the odour of savoury and delicious things that would grace the convivial board—indeed, from the number of intelligent artists employed in the preparations, the *connoisseurs* in culinary science augured favorably of this department of the feast. Don Lope with difficulty escaped the compliments and embraces of his *soi-disant* dear and respected friends, and making his way through this mighty army of parasites, called to one of the servants, and

caused himself to be announced to Don Alonso de Aguilar.

He found the warrior already attired for the ceremony, and girding on a most magnificent sword, which he only used on solemn occasions. After the first salutations had passed, Gomez Arias remained for a few seconds pondering within himself the best means of breaking to Aguilar the disagreeable communication with which he came prepared. A consciousness of the imposture he was meditating, rendered his situation in the highest degree embarrassing, and his habitual self-command seemed almost to have abandoned him at this critical moment. The old warrior perceived the constraint of his manner, and was struck with the singularity of a conduct so much at variance with the usual courtly ease and style of Gomez Arias.

He waited therefore for some time in expectation that Don Lope had something to communicate; but as the young cavalier appeared in no haste to signify his wishes—

“Don Lope,” at length said Aguilar, “you



are really too thoughtful for a man on his wedding-day."

A pause ensued; and the affair becoming more perplexing every minute, Gomez Arias found the urgency of adopting a decisive step. He summoned, therefore, all his adroitness, and with much deference and respect he said to the father of Leonor,—

"Don Alonso, an unexpected event has just been imparted to me,—and the distress which my feelings have sustained, has no doubt excited your surprise,—but before the ceremony proceeds, however great my reluctance, it is imperatively required that I should communicate with you, and solicit your advice in this difficulty."

"Proceed, Señor," said Don Alonso; "though allow me to observe, that any communication of importance ought to have been made before this day."

"Don Alonso," resumed Gomez Arias, with firmness, "there are circumstances in life which are not controllable by the will of man. Strange as the request which I am about to

make may appear, it is absolutely necessary. Sir, with all the respect which you are entitled to command, but with all the firmness which duty requires of me, I must throw myself on your indulgence, and pray you to defer the wedding until to-morrow."

"What!" exclaimed Aguilar, struck with surprise at so extraordinary a demand; "defer the wedding! Don Lope, what means this?—Surely you do not intend to affront my house!"

"The honor of your house, Don Alonso de Aguilar," answered Gomez Arias, with composure, "is now intimately connected with my own; and it would be unjustifiable to suppose me guilty of such intentions."

"What am I then to think of your strange proposal?" demanded Aguilar—his brow mantling with indignation.

"It is a request," replied Gomez Arias, "that I would never have contemplated of my own accord; and you may well imagine what my feelings must be when I am obliged to postpone my happiness even for one day. Certainly it is no trivial inducement that

could prompt me to such a measure; I hope this will plead my justification. I have received a dispatch from my valued friend Count Ureña, stating that he is seized with a mortal distemper, and conjuring me, as I esteem the blessings of a dying man, to repair to his couch ere it be too late. He has a most important communication which must be intrusted to no one but Gomez Arias. The castle of the Count," added Don Lope, "is but six leagues distant, and I shall be back by to-morrow. Now, Don Alonso, I crave your advice: shall I disregard the last request of a man to whom my family are under sacred obligations, or will you allow the ceremony to be delayed till to-morrow, by which means I shall be enabled at once to fulfil the dictates of honor and humanity, without trespassing too far on my own happiness?"

Don Alonso de Aguilar was in some manner reconciled to the necessity of the measure proposed by Gomez Arias, though his pride received a severe check, the effects of which were easily to be discerned in his features.

"But," said he with some asperity of tone, "my permission is not the only one you are to obtain, Don Lope. My daughter must be consulted—have you received her sanction? The Queen also must be forthwith apprized of this sudden change, and I know not how her Highness may be disposed to acquiesce in the alteration."

Gomez Arias promised easily to remove all difficulties with his bride, if Don Alonso would immediately use his influence with the Queen, and urge the necessity of the delay. He was aware that the high spirit of Leonor would, under any circumstances, deeply resent such a measure; still he confidently relied on his own abilities and persuasion to overrule any objection on her part. He hurried therefore to her apartment, craved admittance, which was granted, and found himself before his intended bride, rendered still more beautiful by the costly ornaments with which she was adorned.

"Well, Don Lope," said she smiling, while surveying herself in the mirror, "what think you of my appearance?"

"As of a divinity to whom I bend in adoration," gallantly replied Gomez Arias, and taking her hand he pressed it to his lips with respectful tenderness.

Leonor replied to this mark of her lover's regard with a look of affection.

"But," exclaimed she, laughing, "I cannot compliment Señor Don Lope, upon the taste of his toilet. No doubt he will tell me that his imagination has been altogether engrossed with my beauty, and that he has not bestowed a single thought upon himself: however," she continued in the same strain, "from the respect we owe to the Queen, and the noble friends who will honor us with their presence, it will be necessary to recal the attention of the cavalier, even to so unworthy a subject as himself."

She was still proceeding, when Gomez Arias, who considered every moment he lost of vital importance in the arrangement of his plans, resolved at once to acquaint her with his determination.

"It seems fated, dear Leonor," he said,

"that I am to experience a greater share of disappointment than usually falls to the lot of man; scarcely has the late impediment to our union been removed, and I am on the point of succeeding to my heart's fondest wishes, when——"

"Surely, Lope," interrupted Leonor, with emotion, "your rashness has not again placed you in the peril from which you have so lately escaped—and yet your dress and deportment bespeak something disastrous—Speak—say, Don Lope—let me know the worst."

"Calm yourself, dearest Leonor; there is no danger to apprehend."

He then, in a few words, explained what he had already said to her father, and in soothing terms solicited her consent to what he proposed.

"What need is there of my consent," she said, whilst her countenance betrayed the mortification she experienced, "to a measure that meets the approval of the Queen and my father! Certainly," she continued, "let us defer the ceremony."

There was something in the tone in which these words were delivered, that thrilled to the heart of Don Lope; for the sarcastic smile and the forced tranquillity which Leonor had assumed, plainly indicated that her pride had been deeply wounded, though she affected to treat the affair with indifference. Gomez Arias had recourse to all his eloquence in order to smooth the resentment awakened by his proposal, but Leonor repelled his advances with a resolute dignity of manner.

“Go, Don Lope,” she said, proudly, “you are losing time here—consider the state of the Count; and unless you make good speed, he may never know the kind and valuable friend he possesses.”

She then called her attendants, and with the most perfect indifference began to divest herself of her ornaments, urging all the time to her future husband the necessity of immediate departure.

Gomez Arias, though reluctantly, was compelled to leave his bride, and hurried away further to promote the accomplishment of the plots which distracted his attention.

Leonor was soon disrobed of her bridal garments, and the disconcerted maids were lost in astonishment at the extraordinary change which had taken place. Nor could they explain the cheerfulness of manner visible in their mistress, when she announced that the wedding was to be deferred. But under the apparent indifference of Leonor, rankled a deep feeling of injury. The same pride that resented her lover's determination, forbade her to exhibit any degree of concern; but though the feeling was repressed, its effects would be more lasting than if expended in reproaches and complaints.

Don Alonso de Aguilar signified the unexpected delay to all the officers of the household, and the amazement of every one may easily be conceived. Every trifling circumstance was discussed, but nothing satisfactory elucidated, save that every individual, either as his interest was concerned, or his curiosity unsatisfied, loudly exclaimed against a change which interfered so much with his profit or pleasure.



## CHAPTER XI.

Ambition, like a torrent, ne'er looks back ;  
It is a swelling, and the last affection  
A high mind can put off. It is a rebel  
Both to the soul and reason, and enforces  
All laws, all conscience ; treads upon religion,  
And offers violence to Nature's self.

*Ben Jonson.*

GOMEZ ARIAS, after his interview with Leonor, repaired to the place where he had appointed his confidential valet to await his leisure. Upon his way he met the diligent Roque, and briefly related to him the success which had hitherto attended his operations.

"My good Roque," he gaily exclaimed, "our path now seems clear, and we have nothing to impede our course."

"Aye, Señor," returned Roque, "so it

appears; but God grant that our course may not yet be obstructed. When he who walketh uprightly must see that he stumbleth not, what chance have we?"

"Well," cried his master, laughing, "in such a case mind thou art not in my way; for assuredly my fall will entail upon thee some sore bruises."

"Bless me, good Señor," cried the valet, jocosely, "do what I may, I cannot guard myself from such peril; for, by some unaccountable mischance, when you *do* fall, I am sure to reap the disagreeable results: however, may the saints protect us in all lawful enterprise, and, certes, there is no stronger law than necessity."

"Oh, Heavens!" exclaimed Don Lope, at this moment, "Roque—look! who is that cavalier in the distance?"

Roque looked as he was ordered, but could perceive nothing that might call for such an exclamation.

"Señor," said he, surprised, "what causes your alarm?"

"Is not that *caballero* going towards our mansion?"

"He may—but what is there strange in that?"

"Surely it is the Count Ureña!"

"He looks very much like him."

"Then I am undone! Run, Roque; dispatch! Detain him."

And without further ceremony, by the smart application of his hand to the back of the valet, he gave an additional impetus to the motives for increased exertion, whilst he himself advanced at a brisk pace towards the object that had so unseasonably disturbed his interesting speculations.

Roque, like a good servant, without losing any time in useless parley, obeyed his master's commands by making the best of his way to the person in question, who in reality proved to be the Count. Gomez Arias, feeling certain that his apprehensions were well founded, suddenly seized him by the shoulder, at the same time calling on him to stay.

"What means this?" cried Urefña, sharply, turning round, not at all pleased with the roughness of the salutation: "who is he that dares——"

"Your friend," answered, Gomez Arias, laughing.

"Don Lope!" cried Count Urefña, in amazement.

"The same—but whither are you going?"

"To your house, surely: and now you must confess that I am a sincere friend; for although not entirely recovered from my late indisposition, I could not resist the desire of being present at your wedding; so I posted to Granada, and here I am, in time, I suppose?"

"Oh, quite," replied Don Lope, evidently annoyed.

"But it seems," continued Count Urefña, "that my arrival does not meet with your approbation?"

"My dear friend, you must excuse my apparent want of cordiality, but I have already dispatched an express to your castle to explain matters, and you must on no account be seen in Granada."

"But why?"

"I ask it as a particular favor."

"I cannot comprehend," said the Count, perplexed: then he turned to Roque; but Roque, as if aware that he was about to be questioned, and, conscious of his total inability to satisfy any queries, to save the Count a fruitless expenditure of words, shrugged up his shoulders, and rolled his eyes most expressively.

"My dear Count," cried Gomez Arias, "it is of momentous importance that you should not be seen in this city by any of our mutual relations and friends. My peace of mind, my future prospects, nay, my very honor, require this sacrifice from your friendship. I have no time now to enter into explanation; but the enigma will be solved upon your perusal of my dispatch: in the meantime suffice it to say, that your immediate removal from Granada, and your strictly keeping within your house, will bind me to you with a powerful and lasting obligation."

"*By Santiago, Don Lope,*" exclaimed the

Count, good humoredly, "you must either be crazy, or wish to pass some merry jest upon me. Well, I am heartily happy to see a bridegroom in such spirits."

"No, by my honor," returned Gomez Arias, "I solemnly vow to you, that this step is demanded by actual and imperious necessity."

"Well, well," replied the nobleman, acquiescing, "I will, at all events, comply with your request, whatever may be the motive."

The friends took leave of each other, and Gomez Arias breathed more freely, as he again considered himself assured of the success of his plans.

"Señor," said Roque, "we were just speaking of impediments, and there comes the Count. Now, God send that we may meet no more!"

"Ay, Roque," replied Gomez Arias: "If I think rightly, the most material part of the business remains yet to be done, and it puzzles me strangely how to ensure its success."

"Most prudently said, Señor," returned Roque; "for it is indeed a ticklish point to

dispose of a lady, when it unfortunately happens that she is not equally desirous to be disposed of;—but whither are we going now?”

“To the gardens,—for there we shall be unobserved:” then, after a pause, he continued; “Roque, thou appearest uneasy; what is the reason that at every minute thy head is turned backwards, as if in apprehension?”

“Oh, nothing, Señor, nothing in the world.”

The valet delivered these words in an irresolute tone, for his master's observations had been just. Roque had for some time betrayed such disquietude in his manner, that at length the attention of Don Lope was directed towards the object of his valet's uneasiness, and he perceived a stranger following them at some distance. It was a Moor, of dark and repulsive appearance, who was evidently observing them, although he affected a total indifference to their movements.

“Roque,” said Gomez Arias, in whom the slightest incident now created suspicion, “Dost thou know that strange looking man?”

“ Think you, my honored master,” returned Roque, “ that I am likely to consort with so villainous looking a Moor ? What should I do with such an acquaintance ? I am a *Christiano viejo*,\* and my conscience would not allow me to consort with infidels, and particularly when they are so ill-favored as yonder prowling rascal.”

“ Roque, Roque, thou talkest too much, and the very earnestness of thy manner makes me strongly suspect that thy knowledge of the stranger is more than thou art willing that I should learn.”

“ *San Pedro me valga !*” ejaculated Roque. “ My honored master, how can you thus call in question my integrity ? Do you think, Señor, it is really possible for me to use any mystery with my master ?”

“ Avaunt, thou hypocritical dog !” cried Don Lope; “ thou canst not deceive me: however, I am now too deeply engrossed with more important matters; but mark me—should I find out any double dealing, any imposition on thy part, thou mayest well tremble !”

\* Old Christian.



"Tremble!" exclaimed Roque, in a shrill tone, and affecting indifference. "An honest man has no reason to tremble."

And he trembled and quivered like the aspen leaf, which doubtless did not look as if he had yet possessed himself of the attributes of an honest man. They had by this time arrived at the gardens, and Gomez Arias was exceedingly surprised when he observed that the strange Moor had followed them thither, though keeping always the same respectful distance.

"By my honor," exclaimed Gomez Arias, "such conduct cannot be merely accidental. Roque, *maldito*,\* some mystery lies in this."

"In what, Señor Don Lope?" demanded the valet, with much simplicity.

"Attempt not to impose on me, thou base-born and ungracious varlet. Why does that Moor follow us in this manner?"

"My dear master," replied Roque, "is it in my power to stop the man? What dominion have I over him? These places are public,

\* Accursed.

and I suppose that he, though a Moor, considers that he has the same right to walk here as we faithful Christians. Now, good Señor, could you prevail upon the queen to limit the privileges of those infidels, and allot them a piece of ground for their own use, aloof from all public places, certainly much abomination and contamination would be spared; and thus——”

“ Cease, thou graceless dog!” interrupted Don Lope. “ Cease, for I can no longer endure thy interminable prosing ; a more talkative varlet never intruded on the patience of an indulgent master. See! there is the mysterious Moor again ; and if I mistake not, it is the very same who has followed me already twice before. Yes, surely he is the same, although he has somewhat altered his attire.”

“ What!” cried Roque thrown off his guard ; “ has he followed you too, Señor?”

“ Ah!” returned Don Lope, “ then you have seen him before. Now, rascal,” he added, grasping roughly the poor valet by the collar—“ Leave off this foolish dissembling,

or by *Santiago*, I'll strangle thee on the spot !”

“ Sweet master, you surely don't mean to harm your faithful Roque ?

“ Art thou, then, prepared to confess thy knowledge of the Moor ?” demanded Gomez Arias.

“ Like a good Christian, I am always prepared to confess.”

“ Well, then, begin, thou sinner.”

“ That is easily said,” mumbled out the valet ; “ but, consider, good Sir, that my sins cannot find utterance, as long as you obstruct their natural egress in this most unchristian manner. In pity, gentle Señor, unloose your grasp a little, or I shall die without confessing at all.”

Indeed, the poor valet's face afforded an incontrovertible proof of the sincerity of his expostulations ; for his master, though perfectly elegant in all his movements and demeanor, was at no particular pain in observing the strictest rules of politeness when he chanced to handle his luckless attendant.

Roque's face appeared by this time in its colour no bad specimen of a well burnished pan—his loquacious tongue protruded from its natural dwelling, and the little buried eyes started out with an unusual degree of animation.

Don Lope, observing his distress, released him with a few hearty shakings; and Roque, after taking two or three deep and lengthened respirations, began to examine his person; to assure himself he had sustained no damage, and then applying his hand to his collar—

“*Virgen Santa!*” he cried, “here are fine doings! Oh, my honored master, what have you done! There is my beautiful—my best *gorguera*\* completely destroyed—torn to tatters—absolutely spoilt for ever—past remedy. Oh Lord! Oh Lord! Such a fine *gorguera*, too, of the very best lace, and worked by the pretty and dignified fingers of Lisarda—and what will she say? What will she say when her loquacious abilities are

\* A kind of ruffle or frill, worn formerly round the neck—a collar.

called into action by no less a subject than the total destruction of her superb *gorguera*?"

"By all the powers of darkness, Roque," cried Gomez Arias, "but I would confidently match thee against all the *Lisardas* in the world."

"Señor Don Lope, a fine *gorguera* is perhaps unworthy of your eloquence; for, in sooth, you reserve your powers of tongue for more deserving objects. But consider, Sir——"

"Sirrah!" interrupted Gomez Arias, "I have no time to waste upon your foolery. I perceive your drift; you want to elude my examination; but now, Roque, be explicit or——how often have you seen that Moor?"

"Much oftener than I could wish," answered Roque.

"Then he wished to form an acquaintance with you?"

"Apparently he did; but you know, Señor, we must not always trust to appearances."

"How did you meet his advances?"

"I did not meet them at all, Don Lope, for I kept advancing myself all the time, and as it happened that we adhered constantly to the same regular pace, we had a fair chance of going round Spain without ever coming into contact."

"Roque, thou art a shrewd villain," said Gomez Arias, who, perplexed as he was at the moment, could not help smiling at this conceit of his valet; and reflecting that, with such a fellow, he was more likely to succeed by gentle means than by actual force—

"Now, Roque," he said, "I am willing to give you credit for what you say, and you ought to deal frankly with me in return."

"Aye, Sir," replied Roque, very coolly, "upon the matter of credit we are even."

"Even upon credit! how, Sirrah?"

"For my wages," composedly answered the valet.

"Roque, you may one day go too far," returned Don Lope; "I may laugh at your fooleries, but they do not always fall in accordance with my humor. However, as to

the point in question,—it appears that the Moor had really sought your acquaintance?”

“Yes, I must allow that,” replied Roque; “but with the proviso that I am in no way accountable for the fancies that either Moor or Christian may take to me, as long as I do not give any encouragement, which is precisely the case in the present instance.”

“Well,” said Gomez Arias, “this matter shall be investigated at a future period, for I must attend to more important affairs; and now, Roque, tell me what your fruitful invention has conjured up to rid me of the troublesome object of my disquietude.”

“My fruitful invention, Señor, as you are kindly pleased to term that faculty, which at other times you most unceremoniously treat with contempt;—my fruitful invention, Don Lope, has conjured up——”

“What, my good Roque?” eagerly inquired his master.

“Nothing,” drawled out the valet.

“Provoking idiot,” exclaimed Gomez

Arias; "I know not what induces me to retain such a dull brute about me."

A pause followed, and Don Lope, quite at a loss on what course to determine, seated himself on one of the stone benches concealed by the trees that overshadowed the place. There he began to muse, whilst Roque, unwilling to disturb his reflections, betook himself to examine the unfortunate *gorguera*, and heave many a ludicrous sigh over its melancholy fate.

"Roque," cried Gomez Arias, after a short lapse, "I see no remedy but placing Theodora in a convent."

"Aye!" answered Roque, "it will all be right, provided she consents."

"Consents! By my troth, thinkest thou I shall put myself to the inconvenience of consulting her inclination?—No, Roque; unless some better plan be instantly devised, I must even resolve upon the convent; for the time passes rapidly away, and this girl must be disposed of to-night."

"Could you not contrive to send her to her



father?" demanded Roque: "Poor thing, she is so very unhappy that——"

"Send her to her father!" returned Gomez Arias. "Art thou mad, Roque?—or is it thy wish that my fortune should be ruined for ever?"

"Neither one nor the other," rejoined the valet; "but it strikes me as plainly as daylight, that before we contrive to shut up this bird in the cage, her continual chirping will call some one to the rescue, and then I do not see any chance of mending our fortune; but, by-the-bye, talking of mending, I wonder if I am likely to find any for this most innocent and ill-treated *gorguera*?"

"A thousand curses on thee and on thy *gorguera*!" cried Gomez Arias, impatiently; then, assuming a calmer tone, he continued—"With regard to thy fears that she may call for rescue, that inconvenience may be easily obviated."

"*Santos cielos!*" exclaimed Roque, with visible affright—"You surely do not mean to cut off her tongue?"

“No,” answered Don Lope, “that fate I reserve for yours, unless you contrive to keep it under better control.”—He then added—  
“By sending Theodora to some nunnery in a remote city, such as Barcelona or Saragossa for example,—the air must be sharp, indeed, that can convey thus far the sound of her complaints.”

“But, Señor,” asked Roque, “is the young lady to be conducted to the said remote city by magic, or is she merely to be led in the ordinary way; for if this last be the case, what deception can you use subtle enough to lure a bird that has already been caught once in your snares?”

“That is true,” replied Gomez Arias, “but I must risk a distant danger, to ward off a more immediate one. I do not entirely flatter myself that this unfortunate business will not come to light some time; but if I cannot avoid the storm, I am anxious that, ere it explode, I should at least be under good shelter.”

“Well, Señor,” said Roque, “it is a very

delicate piece of business, and I really cannot harbour the presumption of offering you my advice. I shall obey your commands, as in duty bound, provided they are not in too direct an opposition with my conscience and ———”

“And what?” inquired Don Lope.

“*Lavabo inter innocentes manus meas,*” solemnly chaunted the valet, at the same time affecting to wash his hands.

“*Lavabo inter innocentes*, indeed,” exclaimed Gomez Arias: “here’s a conscientious sinner with a vengeance! So you cannot light upon some feasible design?”

“No, in very truth I cannot.”

“Then who in the name of Satan can extricate me?” cried Gomez Arias, in despair.

“I can!” answered a deep and determined voice.

Gomez Arias started, turned round, and with amazement beheld the mysterious stranger standing, with folded arms, looking calmly upon him.

“And who art thou?” demanded Don Lope,

"that presumest thus to intrude upon my privacy?"

"Good Heavens! who should it be?" said Roque, not allowing time to the stranger to give an answer; "why, my honored master, you piously invoked Satan, and his diabolical majesty sends you forthwith one of his emissaries."

"Stranger!" proceeded Gomez Arias, not heeding his valet, "what is thy name?"

"To know that were superfluous," coldly answered the Moor, "and in nowise necessary towards the acceptance of my services."

"And what assistance canst thou afford me? I know thee not—and yet those features should not be entirely strangers to my eyes."

"It is possible that they are not," replied the stranger, unmoved, "nor is your countenance altogether unknown to me."

"Who then art thou?" demanded Gomez Arias.

"Surely a Moor—a worthless Moor!" bitterly returned the renegade; for it was no other that now addressed Don Lope;—nor

did he feel apprehensive of discovery, altered as he was by the conflict of his passions, continual sufferings, and even by the dress which he had adopted to baffle the penetration of Gomez Arias.

"Whoever I may be," continued the renegade, "is of no consequence; I come to render you service—are you disposed to accept it?"

"I cannot," firmly replied Don Lope, "from an utter stranger, without previously knowing the motives by which he is actuated."

"What!" exclaimed Bermudo, affecting surprise, "cannot you guess my motives? Certainly, I do not pretend to deny that by assisting you *now*, I chiefly mean to serve myself. You surely cannot expect more from a perfect stranger, as you call me. Look at me, Christian!" he added, stifling the conflict which was working in his bosom at the very sight of his foe; "behold, I am a Moor—a miserable Moor. And what else but interest could prompt a destitute, a desperate man to proffer his services to the proud and rich ones of the land?—Love, or esteem, or

gratitude, think you? No, never! My own interest I consult—consult yours, and decide.”

“Interest!” cried Gomez Arias; “there is something reassuring in that word. I like to hear a man talk of his interest, for then I am tempted to believe in his sincerity. What, then, canst thou do for thy interest, Moor? Let us hear in what manner thou art able to serve me.”

“I can do much,” replied the renegade: “You, Don Lope Gomez Arias, are at present involved in a most distressing predicament?”

“I am.”

“And the source of your disquietude is a woman?”

“Proceed.”

“Her name, Theodora?”

“Thou art indeed instructed in this affair—how cam’st thou by the knowledge?”—and he cast a terrible look on the trembling Roque.

“Señor,” cried Roque, “as I hope for salvation, I ——”

"Silence, Sirrah!" exclaimed his master.

"Nay," observed the renegade, "blame not yon trembler; it is true that I applied to him before I resolved upon offering you my services personally; but from fear, or some other reason, he paid no regard to my proposal. I therefore waved all further ceremony, and knowing the crisis to be at hand, I have seized this opportunity to address you."

"And what proposition hast thou to make?" demanded Don Lope.

"To remove from your path this obstacle to your ambition; to rid you immediately of Theodora."

"Fiend!" fiercely cried Gomez Arias, "thou dardest not propose murder to me?"

"No, Christian," calmly returned Bermudo: "dark as my form may be, and unseemly as my features are, yet I would scorn to imbrue my hands in the blood of a woman: no, though a ruffian, I am not yet sunk to the despicable wretch you suppose me. Theodora shall not suffer any indignity from me, but merely be removed from Granada."

"And what security wouldst thou afford of thy adherence to this promise, should I be inclined to enter into arrangements?"

"Security! the most firm and unbounded—the love which a Moor has conceived for her charms."

"What! art thou then the admirer?" sneeringly asked Gomez Arias.

"No:" indignantly exclaimed the renegade—"see you aught of that in me? Can the signs of any tender sentiment be traced in my visage?"

"Well," muttered Roque, "methinks he speaks very sensibly."

"I cannot love," repeated the renegade; "but a Moor, my superior in rank, one whom I have bound myself to serve, is powerfully stricken with the beauty of her you now wish to discard; he will treat her with every consideration, and, in defiance of all disadvantages, is bent upon gaining her love."

The eyes of Gomez Arias glistened with satisfaction as the renegade made these overtures, but still he paused before he came to a determination. He eyed the stranger with

---



the scrutiny of a man resolved to analyze every feature, endeavouring to trace if any line of treachery were discernible; but he beheld nothing to awaken his suspicions. That dark brow was smooth and calm: for well aware of the examination to which he should be subjected by Gomez Arias, Bermudo had prepared himself for an interview on which the success of his plans intimately depended. Thus, his countenance evinced nothing but a gloomy composure, from which expression Gomez Arias could gather no trace of the deeper designs that had urged him to proffer his services.

"Are you resolved?" inquired the renegade, after a pause.

"Where lives the Moor to whom Theodora must be committed?" inquired Don Lope. "Does he inhabit this city? For in this case all further communication on the subject would be needless."

"No," answered the renegade, "he does not dwell in Granada, though not far from it at present: more you shall learn this night,

should you be disposed to admit my proposals: but you must decide forthwith, as I shall be obliged to take my measures accordingly."

He folded his arms and gazed on Gomez Arias with seeming indifference.—Don Lope felt a moment's hesitation; there was something in this mysterious transaction that imparted misgiving to his mind; but the shortness of the time at his disposal, and the imminency of the danger, quickly silenced his rising doubts. Roque, who perceived the inward conflict sustained by his master, attempted, by a gentle remonstrance, to persuade him to discard the Moor's offer, but Don Lope indignantly repulsed the presuming valet.

"Sirrah!" he said, "I need not thy counsel; if, when asked, thy humility will not permit thee to give it, I marvel at thy presumption to offer thy opinion now."

"Moor, what are thy conditions?" he continued, bracing all his energies to a firm resolution.

"The price I shall expect," replied the

renegade, "you are sensible must be commensurate with the importance of my assistance."

"Certainly," exclaimed Gomez Arias, with a sneer: "what you consider a just remuneration will no doubt be some exorbitant extortion."

"Christian!" retorted the renegade, "to show you that I place confidence in the magnitude of my service, I shall leave the reward entirely to your generosity,—and now listen. At midnight you must be with Theodora at the extremity of *El cerro de los Martires*;\* the distance is short from Granada, and can therefore soon be traversed. There I will wait for you, and there you may likewise meet the noble Moor that employs me."

"I am resolved," cried Gomez Arias. "Yes, I will meet you at midnight then"—and rising, he was about to withdraw, when the renegade gently detaining him—

"Stay," he said; "I must have a pledge to present to my master."

\* The Hill of the Martyrs.

"What dost thou demand?" asked Don Lope.

"That ring," returned Bermudo, pointing to one that sparkled on the hand of Gomez Arias.

"I cannot part with this gem; it is a bauble, but one I must preserve; ask for another boon three times as valuable, and it shall be granted thee."

"One does not hinder the other," said the renegade, dissembling. "Think you, Don Lope, that the difficulty from which I disentangle you merits no other reward than a paltry ring? I must have it for a pledge, and it shall be returned in due time for gold."

Gomez Arias cast a look of contempt on the Moor, who, thoroughly prepared for his part, most efficaciously assumed the appearance of the mercenary he was then undertaking to personate.

"Well, what is it you resolve," he cried, with a malicious smile—"to part with a ring, or keep the woman you detest?"

“ Take it!” disdainfully replied Gomez Arias, throwing the required pledge on the ground.

The renegade humbly inclined himself to take it; but he could not so completely master his feelings as not to betray some marks of the pleasure he felt at the possession of so precious a gage. Gomez Arias, however, erroneously attributed these symptoms to the avaricious disposition of the wretch who appeared willing to undertake any service for gold. He again cast a contemptuous glance on the Moor, and making a sign to Roque, abruptly left the place. The renegade gave a loose to the joy which swelled tumultuously in his bosom; he kissed the ring with wild demonstrations of pleasure, and looking in the direction that Gomez Arias was gone—

“ Now,” he exclaimed, “ my time is coming, and soon, proud Spaniard, wilt thou feel the power of thy bitterest enemy.”

## CHAPTER XII.

Cielos en que ha se parar  
Tan dificultosa empresa?

*Lope de Vega.*

Quoi ! tant de perfidie avec tant de courage ?  
De crimes, de vertus, quel horrible assemblage !

*Voltaire.*

AFTER the defeat of his companions at Alhacen, and the total annihilation of their hopes and resources in that quarter, Bermudo the renegade had prudently fled to Granada. He knew he should be in greater security in that city, from the mixed intercourse of Moors and Christians, than by continuing in the wandering habits of a mountain life, now circumvented with numberless dangers from the active searches which the

Christians were making to destroy every rebel that might be surprised lurking in suspicious places. The same course had been pursued by a considerable number of the dispersed Moors, whilst others, less enterprising or more cautious, had concealed themselves in obscure caverns and hiding places.

The renegade was one of the first that had arrived at Granada; and prudently mingling with the crowd of joyous Christians, feigned to be exceedingly interested in the solemnity of the day, when his attention was forcibly attracted by the appearance of a cavalcade in which he recognized an object already familiar to his sight. Great as his surprise was, he could not entertain a doubt that it was Theodora herself, Cañeri's fair captive, who now unexpectedly struck his view. An impulse of curiosity induced him to follow her; until he perceived that she was safely lodged in the mansion of Aguilar. From that instant, Bermudo had unremittingly devoted his time to investigating this occurrence. He learnt with pleasure that his hated foe was still alive.

Nay, he had actually seen him ; and, fervently bent on prosecuting every scheme that might hold out a probability of forwarding his views of vengeance, he had succeeded in his first inquiries to the full extent of his wishes. He had learnt the approaching wedding of Gomez Arias, and, remembering the circumstance of Theodora's lamentations and despair on the supposed death of that individual, he naturally concluded that there was some mystery, which, if discovered, might be easily converted to his own advantage.

He had therefore artfully sought an acquaintance with Roque, the acknowledged servant of Gomez Arias, and partly by insidious questions, and partly by his own penetration, he had drawn the conclusion that Theodora was the forsaken mistress of Gomez Arias, brought by chance to the very scene of his expectations, and who, if apprised of her lover's treachery, would afford a powerful obstacle to his views. The renegade therefore seized the favorable opportunity which presented itself, to accomplish



the ruin of his hated foe, and determined to neglect no means of accomplishing the revenge which had been his solitary pursuit for many years. But his plan of operations was as deep and intricate as the motive that directed him was dark and diabolical. Finding that Roque absolutely refused to open his proposal to his master, he resolved to break the matter to him in person, and with this intention had proceeded to the public walks, as already mentioned. His artful and wily behaviour, assisted by the distracting position of Don Lope's affairs, had betrayed the latter into that snare which the renegade had so cunningly devised, and which, if followed up with success, would lead the unwary Gomez Arias towards a labyrinth, in the mazes of which his destruction might be easily completed.

Thus Bermudo could not conceal his inward satisfaction when he found himself possessed of the ring of Gomez Arias—a ring which he well recollected had been the gift of Queen Isabella,—a precious gage, which,

in the process of his fiendish machinations, might contribute materially to their successful termination. While on the one hand the renegade was thus awaiting with anxiety the result of every move in his diabolical game, and Don Lope on the other was congratulating himself upon the speedy close of his heartless compact, the lovely but unfortunate subject of both speculations was happy in comparative tranquillity at the palace of her preserver.

In perfect obedience to the urgent and repeated injunctions of her lover, Theodora kept herself in seclusion in her apartment. Implicitly confiding in the promises and vows of Don Lope, and fondly indulging in dreams of future bliss, she nevertheless felt a degree of disquietude, natural to the high excitement into which her feelings had been thrown. The morning came—the morning of that eventful day, and the commotion which prevailed throughout the palace, failed not to interest Theodora, although the cause admitted of various interpretations. Now

she fondly imagined that Gomez Arias had already sought an interview with Aguilar, and made the necessary disclosures; and then again she shuddered at the idea that the fond wishes in which she had indulged might never be realized.

This state of anxiety and suspense was fortunately interrupted by Lisarda, who burst abruptly into the room with looks of visible alarm. She turned about without ceremony, and before Theodora could collect her thoughts to inquire into the reason of this perturbation—

“*Santos Cielos!*” she exclaimed, “here are fine doings! that it should come to this! fye—shame! precisely at the very moment that—well, before I would consent to be treated in this manner, I’d suffer my eyes to be plucked out, and my tongue torn from the very root. After so much preparation! Lord! Lord! to disappoint a whole family and throw so many honorable people into confusion!”

Here the good Lisarda was compelled to take breath, of which Theodora most oppor-

tunely availed herself to inquire into the cause of the disturbance.

"Now, gentle Lisarda," she said "tell me what has happened? No disaster to the family; I hope?"

"Alas!" screamed out Lisarda, perfectly recovered from her exhaustion, "your hopes, lady, unhappily, cannot prevent the disaster, for truly a most terrible disaster it is,—fraud and insolence, and most abominable perjury is in the case, I am sure. Yes, the family has been treated this morning with the most untimely and vexatious incivility. Such a breach of delicacy and decorum never did I witness before. *Virgen Santa!* how will this end? The Lord knows that I, for my part, never felt tranquil on the score of the gallant.—No, no; I always said Don Rodrigo for my money—but that is neither here nor there; the evil is done, and we must stand the results. Really it is provoking—such a beautiful dress I had prepared, and now to defer the ceremony!"

"Defer what ceremony?" eagerly inquired Theodora.

"The wedding to be sure," responded Lisarda. "What, did I not tell you before?"

"In sooth you did not."

"Really? God defend us! I am a most thoughtless silly girl, that is certain. Why, my good lady, what should be deferred but the wedding?"

"And that is the misfortune, then, which has occasioned such uncommon signs of regret?" demanded Theodora, scarcely able to conceal her inward satisfaction.

"To be sure, lady; and by my troth, it strikes me that the subject is well worthy the mortification it has caused us all. Good heavens! had the accident happened to you, my sweet lady, perchance you might not be inclined to endure it so philosophically. But the Lord save me! if you do not appear to rejoice in this calamity!"

Rejoice! heavens! what do you mean?" cried Theodora, blushing deeply, and striving to conceal her emotion. "What can induce you to suppose I could have so perverse a disposition, as to rejoice at an event that is

evidently annoying and distressing to my kind and generous benefactor?"

"Dear lady, take not amiss my observation, but as sure as I am a Christian, and hope for salvation, you are much altered for the better since yesterday."

Having communicated the news of the palace to her fair charge, the good Lisarda bustled away to learn further particulars. Theodora soon after received a visit from the noble Don Alonso, on whose countenance were strongly depicted the signs of displeasure. Theodora easily divined the cause, and though she rejoiced in the termination of an event, in which her happiness was so deeply interested, she could not suppress a sensation of generous pity, at the idea that she was the immediate, though innocent, cause of her benefactor's disappointment.

With the simplicity congenial to her nature, she more than once during this interview felt a strong desire to throw herself at the feet of Aguilar, and frankly to avow the whole of her melancholy tale; yet she was restrained from

following the genuine impulse of her heart, when she recollected her lover's absolute command. Thus, although her delicacy and frankness were hurt at the duplicity she was compelled to use towards one by whom she had been rescued from the most appalling fate, she stifled the suggestions of sincerity, to observe implicitly the wishes of a man who was even then planning her future misery and misfortune. Nor was this the only trial that Theodora had to sustain. She had been obliged to resist the invitation of Aguilar, who repeatedly pressed her to make her appearance in the grand saloon, and she had the mortification of suspecting, that an unfavorable construction was put upon her denial. They might attribute to female caprice, or a want of proper feelings for a generous benefactor, that which in reality was the mere effect of a sensitive mind and a devoted heart.

Theodora underwent all these trials with patient resignation, in the fond expectation of a speedy deliverance from her present irksome situation. In this uninterrupted succes-

sion of doubt and fear she spent the long and tedious day, and hailed with transport the arrival of night, which was now enveloping in her sable mantle the proud turrets and lofty buildings of Granada.



## CHAPTER XIII.

Per gli antri, e per le selve ognun traea  
Allor la vita, nè fra setà, o lane  
Le sue ruvide membra racebglica.

*Metastasio.*

At a short distance from Granada there is a place called *El cerro de los Martires*,<sup>(5)</sup> which traditionary lore had invested with most appalling histories. This place abounded in deep caverns and subterranean vaults, in which it was a received tradition that the Moors used in former times to shut their Christian captives, and make them undergo dreadful torments. By the vicissitudes of fortune, however, these dungeons were now converted into secure retreats by the fallen and

dispersed Moors. Several of these lurking places had already been traced out by the unwearied perseverance of the Spaniards, or betrayed through the treachery of mercenary Moors, but there still were some remaining which baffled every research, and whose existence known only to some of the principal and most faithful Moors, were in no danger at least of immediate discovery.

To these subterraneous habitations a considerable portion of the shattered forces of Cañeri had repaired, whilst some of the bolder party of El Feri de Benastepar had fearlessly sought refuge in Granada, where, in despite of the severe decrees promulgated by the queen, and the examples made of those who had infringed them, the rebels nevertheless found shelter and protection from their fellow-countrymen. Thus while the rebellion seemed quelled to all appearance, it was not entirely extinguished. A secret fire still slumbered under the ashes, ready to burst forth when a master hand could be found to raise the flame. But the want of unity

amongst the Moors, and the general dispersion which had ensued after the destruction of their last town, seemed to offer an insurmountable bar to the organization of a second revolt. Besides, the death of El Feri had struck the hearts of his followers with dismay, and there was no Moor of sufficient talent or enterprize to supply his place.

Things were in this state, when at the close of a sultry day three men were seen cautiously traversing the path which led towards *El cerro de los Martires*. The foremost, who appeared to act as guide, from his robust and athletic make, and the lowering expression of his countenance, might be easily recognized as Bermudo, the renegade; the others were strangers, and apparently disguised. They proceeded onwards, slowly, and with care, until at length they stopped at a sequestered spot, overgrown with brambles, and surrounded with high and widely spreading trees, whose sombre foliage offered an impenetrable barrier to the light of day. They plunged into the midst of this wilderness, and presently

the renegade blew a soft and hollow blast, when the thicket suddenly seemed to move, and discovered an aperture which had hitherto been concealed. The two Moors, for such they were, and their guide, then descended through the opening into a deep and winding subterraneous passage. After a descent of a few minutes, they found themselves in a spacious vault hewn out of the solid rock and illumined by a solitary lamp, which afforded only light sufficient to render the darkness more dismal, and to give an indistinct view of forms and countenances naturally repulsive, rendered still more so by apparent want and exhaustion. About a dozen men and two or three women were reposing at length in different parts of the cave, without any other covering than their tattered dresses, and bearing on their features an expression of resolute despair.

At the further extremity of the cavern, which was somewhat elevated, and rendered more tenantable by several pieces of an old carpet, reclined a man of better appearance, whose apparel had evidently not undergone

such severe service as those of his companions. This personage it might easily be supposed was the chief of those who, from their exterior, might, without any great deviation from the rules of inferences, be denominated a gang of desperate robbers. But it seldom happens that robbers in the vicinity of a rich and populous city are to be found in a state of such utter destitution; and if such were really the case, it might puzzle the beholder to discover what possible inducement they could have to continue in so unprofitable a profession.

As soon as the renegade and his two companions entered that cheerless and uncomfortable dwelling, all those woe-begone and lugubrious countenances suddenly acquired a degree of animation. It was not without reason; for the renegade and one of his companions laid down some provisions, whilst the other stood with his arms folded, a calm spectator of these proceedings, contemplating with deep attention the group before him.

“Alagraf! Malique!” cried the seated

personage above designated: "Who is that stranger?"

"Fear not, Cañeri," whispered the renegade; "this is a friend—nay, perhaps the sincerest adherent and the bravest supporter of the Moors in their present condition."

"Certainly from his proud bearing in our presence," replied Cañeri, with offended dignity, "one might, indeed, be led to suppose him a person of consequence, did not those unseemly habiliments contradict such a conclusion."

The stranger answered not, but contented himself with casting a look of mingled pity and scorn on the mighty potentate of the cavern. The chief, however, was prevented from inquiring more minutely into the pretensions of one who appeared little disposed to pay him unqualified deference, by the shrill and croaking voice of Marien Rufa, who at that moment was actively engaged in heaping a redundancy of abuse on the devoted head of her husband Aboukar. The squabble, as far as it could be ascertained amidst the confused din, originated in some

provisions which the provident Aboukar, in his capacity of ex-master of the household, judiciously concluded ought to come by right under his controul; accordingly, *secundum artem*, he had entered on his official duties by secreting a portion of the said provisions for his own private use, before they were either served up to Cañeri, or finally distributed amongst his hungry and rapacious band. Marien Rufa had observed the sly larceny, but what in the name of conjugal regard could have induced the crone to so unkind and unmatrimonial an action as the exposure of her own husband, is not easily to be determined. An upright and indulgent person might be tempted to believe it was a proper regard and tenderness for the purity of his character; but others, not quite so considerate, would suspect, and perhaps with a nearer semblance of truth, that the unamiable spouse was instigated by a less honorable motive. It was a fact, not to be contradicted, that Marien Rufa and her once beloved Aboukar, at present detested as cordially

as they had formerly loved each other; which curious phenomenon in the condition of matrimony is not of such rare occurrence as to need any particular investigation into its nature or origin.

As soon as Cañeri observed the disturbance, conjecturing from the character of the belligerents that the commotion was likely to increase apace, he rose suddenly from his seat, an action which clearly indicated the extent of his indignation, and with vehemence exclaimed—

“Silence! What means this disturbance? Slaves, is this your respect for your chief? Explain; what is the cause of this unwarrantable breach of decorum?”

No sooner had Cañeri uttered the word “explain,” than Marien Rufa, conscious no doubt of her explanatory talents, in a most discordant tone began:—

“Please your Mightiness, the cause of——”

“Stop, stop,” cried Cañeri; “I do not wish *thee* to explain.” Then, turning, he demanded an explanation from Malique, who,



in a few words, corroborated the statement of Marien Rufa respecting the ugly trick of which Aboukar stood accused. Upon this, Cañeri, after pondering some time, and gently striking his forehead as if to conjure some luminous idea,—

“Malique,” he cried, “bring hither the source of contention.”

The provisions were immediately placed before him, and the sapient chief, after putting aside a portion for his own use, wisely proceeded to give his judgment.

“Here, Malique,” he said, “distribute these amongst you all, except the convicted culprit and his accuser.”

This retributive justice was greatly applauded by the surrounding party, whose looks clearly indicated the high opinion they entertained of their chief's wise decision, although their ravenous hunger might have, indeed, contributed somewhat to the enhancement of their approbation. The renegade and the new comer stood silent spectators of the scene, but they could not disguise the

expression of their contempt both for the degraded state of their companions, and the foolish importance with which the vain-glorious Cañeri comported himself.

Peace being thus restored by the chief's sagacious intervention,—

“Now, Alagraf,” he said, “what tidings dost thou bring from Granada? Will thy expectations be fulfilled, and my wishes crowned with success? What further inquiries hast thou made relating to Theodora?”

“I have not been idle,” sullenly answered the renegade.

“And yet,” returned Cañeri, “I fear exceedingly that our mutual hopes will be disappointed.”

“Not so, Cañeri,” retorted Bermudo; “but this is no time to enter upon that subject, for another of greater importance has a previous claim to our notice.”

“By the holy Prophet!” exclaimed Cañeri, with displeasure, “I should imagine that an affair in which I am interested, is, of itself, sufficient to command immediate attention:

Explain, then," he added impatiently, "that which concerns me most."

"Moor !" cried the renegade with anger, "thou surely must forget that I am not thy slave : no, by my sword, I will not speak of these matters until I think the time befitting."

Cañeri was thunderstruck at this open act of insubordination ; he rolled his eyes in choler, and looked on his band as if appealing to them to chastise the insolence of the renegade. But though those bold words had thrown the Moors into some consternation, yet no one dared to move a step, so much were they awed by the composed demeanor with which the renegade gazed upon them.

"Alagraf," said Cañeri, disguising his indignation, "are then my injunctions openly to be disregarded before my people ?"

"Cañeri," answered the renegade resolutely, "you urge me too far, and you ought to know me better."

A murmur of discontent prevailed among the band, which was about to break forth against the renegade, when, suddenly, their

movement was checked by the stranger Moor, who advanced towards them in a threatening attitude.

"Peace!" he exclaimed; "peace! ye abject, paltry slaves!"

"And who art thou," demanded Cañeri, trembling with rage, "that darest thus arrogate to thyself the power of dictating in my presence?"

"I am, Cañeri," answered the stranger haughtily, "thy superior in all, except in vice."

"Seize him!" roared out Cañeri. "Seize the wretch!"

"Stay!" cried Malique, interposing; "lay not your hands upon that man.—Most mighty Cañeri," he then added, addressing the indignant chief, "Mohabed Alhamdem, our opulent brother at Granada, has intrusted that Moor to our care, commanding us to lead him hither; he has most important matters to communicate, and, if the word of Mohabed is to be credited, it is from this stranger alone that the Moors may expect their salvation."

"Who, then, is this mighty personage?" demanded Cañeri, with a scornful sneer.

"He will himself inform you," replied the renegade. "Cañeri, you know how firmly I am devoted to the Moorish cause; why then was I insulted when it was only to advance the interests of that cause I spoke? But let that pass; I am no pettish boy to quarrel with my associates for a word uttered intemperately in an unguarded moment."

He held his hand in token of reconciliation, and then continued:—"Theodora, if appearances amounting almost to certainty deceive me not, will be yours, ere long."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Cañeri. "When?"

"To-night or never," replied Bermudo. "Shortly I shall disclose to you all the particulars of my transaction; and now let us examine on what resources we can depend for a renewal of the insurrection."

"Resources! None," said Cañeri. "Our surviving men are dispersed and worn out by repeated misfortunes; most of our chiefs are

dead, or have passed over to Africa, and the only man who had the power of rallying the straggling Moors, he who alone succeeded in imparting confidence to his followers, El Feri de Benastepar, is now no more: fallen by the arm of Aguilar, he shared the fate of those brave men who mingled their own ashes with those of Alhacen."

"El Feri de Benastepar is not dead," cried the renegade.

Cañeri and his men started from the ground with an instinctive impulse of returning courage, and all, with one accord, sent up an exclamation of joyful surprise.

"But where is the chief, then?" demanded Cañeri.

"There!" replied Bermude, pointing to the stranger.

"Yes," said he, throwing aside his disguise; "yes, Cañeri, in this humble garb, which necessity has compelled me to adopt, do you again behold El Feri; conquered by Alonso de Aguilar, but miraculously rescued from the grasp of death to redeem the tarnished

glories of the Moorish name ; to close again in combat with the proud Christian chief, and, with the assistance of the holy Prophet, to doom him to that untimely death which he vainly imagines he has inflicted on me."

A simultaneous murmur of approbation ran through the surrounding party ; even Cañeri, jealous as he was of the superior power and glory of El Feri, hailed with real satisfaction his unexpected appearance amongst them ; for in the imagination of Cañeri were revived those hopes of asserting the station of fancied dignity from which he had been hurled by the late overthrow of the Moors. He again clung to the fond idea that the Moslem cause would ultimately triumph, and then he of necessity must succeed to a conspicuous share of power, to which he conceived himself entitled by his distinguished birth.

Thus the Moors, whom, but a moment before, we have seen in the lowest state of dejection, now flew to the opposite extreme : they pictured to their fancy the wonderful powers of

El Feri, and the magic influence which his name would possess in calling again his countrymen to arms, while the desperate nature of such an undertaking, and the obstacles with which it was on every side beset, vanished altogether before their sanguine expectations.

The renegade beheld this general emotion with more signs of discontent than satisfaction; he argued little advantage to be derived from men, who could so easily pass from the depths of despondence to the summit of hope; for to a man like himself, endowed with strong passions, but accustomed to watch progressively their workings, such sudden transitions betrayed a weakness utterly incompatible with desperate enterprises.

"But how," now inquired Cañeri, addressing El Feri, "has thy precious life been preserved?"

"When I fell by the arm of Aguilar," returned El Feri, "it was more from the excessive fatigue which I had for several days endured, than from the nature of the wounds



inflicted—they were not mortal; and as I lay extended and helpless on the ground, I thought upon my country, and my heart sunk within me when I considered that my life, which might still have been preserved to her service, would soon, alas! be lost in a fiery grave. The town was deserted—nought was heard but the crackling of the flames, and the groans of those that were dying around me. Our enemies were gone, and I, collecting my small remaining strength, with much difficulty contrived to drag myself from that place of desolation. At length, exhausted, I sunk under a tree, and there, for want of timely assistance, I might have breathed my last, when, to my joy, I observed two or three of our party, who had escaped in the general confusion, advancing towards me, and the hopes which had almost abandoned me again began to revive. My preservers removed me immediately to a place of security, and administered all the remedies that their limited means could afford. When I had sufficiently recovered my strength, in va-

rious disguises we arrived at Granada, and made ourselves known to Mohabed Al-hamdem: at his dwelling the plan of a second rising has been concerted, and I am come here to ask your support to the undertaking."

"Noble and beloved companion," replied Cañeri, "next to the pleasure of seeing thee alive, comes, certainly, that of hearing thy proposal. I rejoice that, notwithstanding our little trivial disagreements, thou hast thought of me in the hour of an important crisis: command me freely, and command all mine."

As he delivered these words with his habitual affectation of dignity, he looked around upon his reduced followers, who all inclined their heads in token of blind acquiescence.

"And is this all thou canst command, Cañeri?" asked El Feri.

"No, not all; for at a moment's notice, I can assemble a considerable number, now prudently scattered in little parties, the better to

avoid observation. They lie concealed in some neighbouring caves, and will at the first summons readily obey my orders. But what are thy designs, my noble friend? Dost thou contemplate the surprise of some fort? or hast thou in meditation a second expedition to the *Sierra Nevada*?

"Neither;" replied El Feri: "my plans of operation are now widely different; I mean to strike the blow far from the city of Granada: more I will impart to thee at a future period. Art thou well determined to second my exertions?"

"Yes," answered Cañeri, bowing his head. "In the name of the holy Prophet, I swear to follow thy instructions."

"Well then," returned El Feri, satisfied, "this very night I set out for the *Sierra Bermeja*, attended only by Mohabed and a servant: that opulent Moor has enthusiastically joined our cause, and several of his friends, slow to contribute with their persons towards the result, have at least liberally

assisted us with their gold. Thou, Cañeri, must not tarry here, but with the utmost expedition march to Alhaurin, a town neglected by the Christians, which thou wilt easily surprise; this is to serve as a rallying place for all those who may flock to our standard. I am assured that the mountain inhabitants of the *Sierra Bermeja* are prepared to join me,—thus, while the proud Spaniard triumphs in security, and rejoices at the supposed death of El Feri, he will suddenly dissolve the charm, and summon his enemies again to encounter the effects of his wrath and vengeance. And now, Cañeri, remember that Alagraf and Malique are the only persons through whom we are to communicate: so to your post, and there await my further instructions. Farewell! and when we meet again, may victory have rewarded our exertions!"

He said; and the two chiefs taking friendly leave of each other, El Feri, without delay, returned to Granada. Cañeri, scarcely able

to contain his joy, rose and paced around the cave as if he were already dictating from his palace at Alhacen.

"Now, my brave followers!" he cried, suddenly halting, "be prepared to march at a moment's notice."

Such an injunction was perfectly useless; for it so happened that his gallant followers had no other preparation to make than to rise and march, having no baggage to encumber their operations beyond the very slender equipments which they carried on their persons.

"But!" exclaimed Cañeri, in the midst of his exultation, "Alagraf, if we depart immediately, how is thy promise concerning the fair Christian to be fulfilled?"

"Fear not, Cañeri," answered the renegade; "I have promised you that Theodora will be yours to-night or never."

"Or never!" re-echoed Cañeri, dismally shaping his face into most unwarrantable elongation: "Or never! We have yet some

time to remain, and I would gladly wait for such a prize."

"It wants," observed the renegade, "but an hour to midnight,—the time approaches,—my heart feels confident Theodora will soon be in your power, and I shall then have the means of accomplishing my revenge."

## CHAPTER XIV.

Si! m'ingannai: scerner doves, che in petto  
Di un traditor mai solo un tradimento  
Non entra.

*Alfieri.*

Le cruel, hélas! il me quitte,  
Il me laisse sans nul appui!

*Berquin.*

"IN the name of Heaven, Don Lope," said Roque; "let me again conjure you to pause before you finally resolve upon this undertaking: my heart misgives me strangely."

"Thy heart," replied Gomez Arias, "is a most impertinent monitor. Simple man! what other course is left me to pursue?—Is it thy wish that I should relinquish the most glorious prize, at the very moment of its attainment, from a pusillanimous fear of consequences? Already so far advanced, must I shrink from an honorable alliance with Leonor? By heaven! I cannot; I will not. Prudence, consistency, honor, forbid!

"But, saving your displeasure," interposed Roque, "methinks that same honor of which you appear so tenacious, cannot urge you to betray an unfortunate girl into the hands of infidel Moors. And although your present situation is certainly fraught with difficulties, there may yet be found some other way of proceeding with regard to Theodora, not altogether so frightful."

"No, Roque, none. We have now no longer time to think; we must act, and act without wasting a single precious moment.—Go, dispatch, deliver this letter to Theodora, and conduct her to the place that I have already pointed out. The night is fast advancing; dispatch; and be faithful in the discharge of my orders. This step is unavoidable, and to its necessity even thou thyself wilt be reconciled, though at present it may awaken in thy bosom a foolish sentiment of pity, or fear, I know not which."

Roque attempted no further expostulation, but heaving a sigh, and casting his eyes to heaven, proceeded to the discharge of his



commission, whilst his master hurried to the solitary spot where he had decided they should meet. Roque, in that wavering mood so natural to his character, alike unfit for good or evil, made his way to Don Alonso's garden, deliberating within himself on the course he ought to follow. Pity and remorse, at intervals, made him shrink with dismay from the picture of wretchedness which the unfortunate Theodora presented to his view. There was something so iniquitous and unmanly in betraying the unsuspecting and lovely victim, that the feelings of the valet, though far from being refined, revolted from the participation: once or twice he had even resolved to acquaint Theodora with the premeditated plot, but these momentary impulses of his better feelings were soon checked for want of strength to follow up the generous suggestion. The awe with which Roque beheld his master, and the dread of the results which his disclosure might produce in the mind of the victim, powerfully contributed to silence the voice of conscience. Then he

hoped that the marriage once over, measures might be taken for the security and comfort of Theodora; and finally he fondly admitted the hope, or rather forced his rebellious mind to encourage it, that Gomez Arias would relent at the sight of the unhappy girl, and that he would then fix upon some other expedient less distressing and criminal.

In this conflict, he arrived at the palace, and entering by a private gate into the garden, he approached the window of Theodora's apartment. The anxious girl, who had been all the day on the alert, immediately descended, and stood by the side of Roque.

"Where is he?" she eagerly cried, upon meeting the valet.

"Prudence," replied Roque, "has obliged him, much against his inclination, to keep aloof; but here is a letter which will explain his motives, and the course that you are immediately to adopt,"

Theodora ran over the contents of the letter in a trepidation of anxiety, and closed the perusal of it by imprinting the fervent kisses of

love and devotion on the vile instrument of treachery.

“Let us make haste,” she then said, and without waiting for Roque to lead the way, she hurried through the garden upon the wings of affection. The valet’s heart misgave him, when he beheld her speeding with such haste to her destruction. He contrasted the devoted confidence of Theodora, hurrying to the fatal spot, with the duplicity and heartlessness of Gomez Arias tranquilly awaiting her arrival. Roque led her towards the place appointed; nor could he suppress a tear, as he listened to the artless language in which her full heart indulged during the way, in the fond expectation of being again united to her lover, and obtaining the forgiveness of her beloved parent. They arrived at length at the place. It was a beautiful night, unsullied by a breath of wind. The eager eyes of Theodora were strained to catch as soon as possible a sight of the dear object of her solicitude. She perceived at the further extremity a man enveloped in a cloak, and standing beside three horses. She

gazed intensely; her bosom throbbed with emotion,—forward she hurried—she flew; and in a moment, with all the enthusiasm of her fond nature, threw herself into the arms of her lover.

Gomez Arias received the tender pressure with feelings hard to be defined. Distracted with conflicting passions, he appeared unable to act the part which he had judged necessary in this critical moment, while the loving Theodora, despite of her infatuation, could not but observe the coldness and restraint evident in his manner.

“What ails you, Lope?” she said, soothingly; “are you not happy?”

“Happy! yes, Theodora, I am happy; but be not astonished at my disquietude: for alas! in my distracting situation I can feel no otherwise; the step which I am about to take——”

“Oh! I am sensible!” cried Theodora, earnestly, “of the extent of the sacrifice; I know the glorious prospects you relinquish by renouncing the hand of Leonor. Yes, I am indeed, aware of all the distressing circum-

stances that may ensue from the resolution you have taken. But, oh, Lope! will not the unutterable love, the fervid devotion of your poor Theodora, afford you some requital for the advantages which your honor obliges you to abandon?"

She looked fondly in his countenance. A tear stood trembling upon her eye, but in her lover's she beheld no sign of mutual tenderness. He coldly assisted her to mount, and bidding Roque follow, for some time they continued their route in silence. Theodora, however, in the gentleness of her nature, was disposed to deceive herself, and without hesitation attributed her lover's strange behaviour to the difficult situation in which he was placed. Nor could she feel hurt when she considered that it was for her sake that Gomez Arias exhibited this disquietude. She had secured the most important object of her life, and was not so selfish or unfeeling as to reproach him with a conduct which she hoped would soon be changed. But the arguments of reason are not always in accordance with

the suggestions of feeling. Her mind commanded her to be satisfied, but her heart, in acquiescing with those dictates, was not entirely at ease, though she sedulously endeavoured to conceal her emotion from Gomez Arias. Her efforts, however, were not always successful, and the deep sighs that escaped her bosom, naturally attracted the notice of her lover. He, therefore, artfully strove, by bestowing some passing tokens of affection, to reassure the victim he was leading to the sacrifice. But the art of man, though it may succeed in imitating the various passions which agitate the human breast, is rarely successful when he attempts to feign the more tender sentiments of the heart; for cold must always be the language addressed to one, who has been the object of a fervid passion, when that passion is unhappily extinct. No powers of art—not all the force of imagination can call into life fresh flowers on the barren waste of a heart that no longer loves.

As they approached *El cerro de los Martires* Theodora suddenly began to sob aloud, and

Gomez Arias foresaw the dreadful scene he should have to sustain before he could finally disengage himself from the sorrowing girl.

"Theodora, why do you weep?" he asked in a tender tone.

"Alas! I know not," she answered. "But my heart is heavy—I feel as though some misfortune were impending. Whither are we going?—surely this is not the road to my father's mansion? Lope! Lope! whither are you leading me?" she inquired, in a thrilling voice of distress.

Steeled as it was against compassion, the heart of Gomez Arias felt moved at the question. Roque was exceedingly affected, and a groan escaped him as he piously ejaculated—  
"Heaven protect her!"

Theodora heard the exclamation; for nothing that bodes ill can evade the acute sense of misery.

"Thank you, good Roque," she said, mournfully. "But why call on the protection of heaven? My own Lope, are we in danger?"

---

Gomez Arias did not answer ; for a feeling akin to remorse arose within him, as he thought on the treacherous duplicity he was about to practice against one whose very existence seemed to depend upon his love. They had now crossed *El cerro de los Martires*, and were ascending a little slope, when suddenly three or four persons sprung from their concealment, and checked their further advance. The moon shone brilliantly, so that every object could be plainly distinguished, and Theodora saw with dismay the forms that were moving towards them, as if with the express determination of intercepting their passage.

"They are Moors!" she exclaimed. "Oh, heavens! what can they want in this solitary place at the dead of night? Surely they must be some of those desperate people, who have been left houseless and forlorn in the late rebellion. Alas! they will retaliate on us all the horrors which they have suffered. My dear Lope, if we must die, it will be at least some consolation to meet death with thee."



She looked earnestly on her lover, but could trace no emotion in his features ; they were composed. The present feelings of Gomez Arias partook of no alarm, and the unfortunate Theodora felt a fearful presentiment, as she perceived the unmoved expression of his countenance ; for though the bravery of her lover might not allow him to dread the approach of death, for his own sake, yet, surely, her own danger ought to create in his mind some sensation of anxiety. In this frightful agony of thought, Theodora remained until they came up with the individuals who had awakened her fears. One of them now detached himself from the group, and advanced to address Gomez Arias, who had checked his horse to await his coming. What was the horror of Theodora when she recognized in the person that stood before them, the dreaded form of the renegade ! She uttered a faint scream ; and had not Gomez Arias prevented her, she would have fallen to the ground.

“ So, Don Lope,” said the renegade, “ you

have kept your word: I could expect no less from the noble Gomez Arias."

"And who are thy companions?" inquired Don Lope.

"There stands," replied Bermudo, pointing to Cañeri, "the illustrious Moor of whom I spoke—so the sooner we proceed to our arrangements, the better."

The mutual understanding which appeared to subsist between Gomez Arias and the renegade, and the heartless manner in which the last words were delivered, left not a doubt in the mind of Theodora, that some treacherous design was in contemplation. Her fears were soon confirmed; for Gomez Arias, turning to her, in a tone of pity, began——

"Theodora, I will not attempt to palliate the conduct which necessity obliges me to pursue; but the circumstances in which I am placed admit of no alternative. We must part for ever—nor can I for a moment prolong a scene, which must be so distressing to your feelings. It consoles me, however, to think that I can place you in the care of those

who have pledged themselves to treat you with every consideration."

Saying this, he threw himself from his horse, and found no difficulty in bearing to the ground the yielding form of Theodora. She could not speak; amazement had absorbed all the powers of her mind, and benumbed the principle of will and action. She stood wildly gazing on vacancy, like one conscious of labouring under a dreadful dream, and striving to awake from the painful illusion. But when Cafferi advanced, when she actually saw his hated figure standing before her with a smile of exulting joy, she seemed suddenly to regain all her powers of recollection.

" 'Tis he!" she cried frantically, "'tis he. Oh! horror!"—She ran wildly towards her lover.

"Oh, Lope, deliver me from him."

"No, young lady," returned the Moor, "you must now come with me."

"Oh, heaven!" she shrieked, "no, no, he cannot—he will not thus abandon me!—Oh,

Lope!—my dear—my own beloved!—deceive this barbarous, this abhorred Moor.”

She appealed to her lover in the fervour of deep anguish,—he turned from her to depart; the moment was bitter; he felt the rankling pangs of remorse. The wretched girl clung to him,—he made one desperate struggle to disengage himself.

“Moor, take her,” he cried with throbbing emotion, “but oh! deal thou more kindly by her than I have done. Here,” he continued; “receive this, and see that she is treated with the regard which her beauty merits, and her misfortunes deserve. Act faithfully to thy pledge, or dread the worst effects of my vengeance.”

He threw a large purse of gold upon the ground, which Malique lost no time in securing, whilst Cañeri, addressing Gomez Arias,—

“Christian,” he said, “I fear not thy vengeance, and I value not thy gifts; the word of a Moor is plighted; I love the beautiful female, and these considerations will afford the best security for my conduct.”

He then advanced to take the hand of Theodora, but she flew from him with a look of wildness that might have moved the very stones to pity.

"Oh! no, no, never! Gomez Arias, you may be cruel, but cannot be infamous.—Oh, do not, do not deliver me into the hands of the detested enemy of our country—the ferocious, the false Cañeri."

"What!" exclaimed Gomez Arias, surprised, "is this, then, Cañeri, the rebel chief?"

"The same," replied the renegade, interposing; "will that be an obstacle to our agreement?"

Gomez Arias remained a few minutes in silence; he felt an inward disquiet he could not well explain; the name of Cañeri had awakened a new and painful sensation; it recalled to his mind the edicts of the queen, which he was on the point of violating by holding intercourse with the rebel; but again he thought that the elevated situation to which he would be shortly exalted might

sufficiently secure him against any danger, should even this transaction ever come to light, of which he could not foresee the slightest probability.

Meantime, poor Roque, who perceived the hesitation of his master, ventured to approach him, and with a voice agitated with fear,—

“Oh, my dear master,” he said, “if it is not too late, let us retreat from this dreaded spot; do not conclude this hellish treaty, for be assured it will prove the destruction of your fortunes, if there is an omnipotence above or justice amongst men.”

It was too late; the heart that could not yield to the voice of its own conscience, was not easily to be moved by the expostulation of a dependant. Gomez Arias had now advanced too far to retrace his steps; it was a fearful deed, but he relied with implicit confidence on its being for ever buried in silence. Then, without further delay, he made a sign to the renegade in token of agreement, and turned towards Granada.

Theodora became frantic; with a desperate

effort she flew to her lover; a dismal, harrowing shriek quivered through the inmost fibres of her heart; and then she spoke not, but clung to Gomez Arias with the fearful might arising from despair. Her face was hidden in his bosom, her pulse beat not, and the spark of life seemed extinct. Gomez Arias gently endeavoured to extricate himself from her firm embrace; she again became conscious of his intention, and in the paroxysm of agony she exclaimed—

“Barbarian! have I deserved this from you?”

Roque now sobbed aloud like a child, and Gomez Arias himself was moved; but the renegade, fearful of the results of the scene, advanced to claim his victim.

“Oh, my honored master!” cried Roque, “does not this harrowing picture of despair move the kinder feelings of your heart?—you once loved her tenderly, and were it only for the remembrance of what she was, spare her now.”

Gomez Arias felt the rebuke; it soured his

temper and confirmed him in his purpose. He was indignant at the freedom of his dependant, and darted on him a withering look of displeasure. But Roque, who had now acquired a strength of mind and courage, of which his nature till then had seemed wholly destitute, in a bold tone began—

“Shame to the man who calls himself noble, and can behave in this manner towards a helpless woman! Don Lope, this is a fearful deed, and, mark me well, the time will come at last, the time of terrible retribution.”

The brow of Gomez Arias grew black as a storm, and every suggestion of pity at once vanished.

“Villain!” he cried, in a voice choaked with rage, “is it a base born varlet like thee, that dare utter such threats to me! Moor—” he added, turning to the renegade, “take this fellow into your charge, and see that he does not return to Granada; I will reward thee well.”

The renegade gave a token of assent, and made a sign to his companions to secure him.



"And what right," said Roque, indignantly, "have you to sell me thus? I am a free born man, and a true Christian."

"Roque," replied Gomez Arias, somewhat more composedly, "I have often warned thee that thy indiscretion would at length bring thee into trouble and disgrace. Thy offence merits even a more exemplary punishment, which I will spare in consideration of thy former services. Away with him, Moors," he added, "and take him to the distant country whither you are going, for here he may prove dangerous to me."

"Aye," returned Bermudo, in a voice of import, "we will take him in charge, for as you say, Don Lope, he may indeed be dangerous to you."

These words, though nothing in themselves, were uttered with a mysterious meaning that sounded ominous to Gomez Arias. He felt as though a cloud was darkening over the ambitious prospects which had seduced his mind and perverted his heart; the voice that spoke rung in his ear like an awful warning of

which he had some strange recollection. Again he attempted to escape from the scene. One sudden powerful effort, and he loosened himself from the grasp of Theodora: the despairing girl fell to the ground, and raved aloud, and pronounced a curse on her betrayer. Then in the furious impulse of madness, she snatched at the dagger that glittered in the girdle of Cañeri, with the determination of closing her wretched existence; but her deadly intention was thwarted by the renegade, who arrested her arm in time to prevent the fatal deed.

Gomez Arias now sprung upon his horse, and Cañeri took the hand of Theodora; but she furiously darted from him, and sought to fly after her lover, who was speeding fast away.

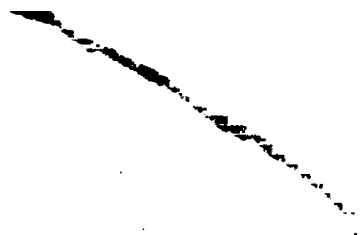
“Oh stay!” she continued, crying in a tone of agony; “Oh stay, Lope! complete your work—in pity kill me. *One* crime more will not make you unacceptable to her you love. Return! return! oh Lope, in the name of heaven!—Not for me, but for the love of

LEONOR, do not leave me thus ! Oh Lope, do not leave me thus !”

Gomez Arias, as he sped away, heard the piteous appeal dying faintly on the wind, and he plunged the rowels into his courser's sides, to escape the harrowing sensation which such accents produced. Soon the mournful cries were lost in the distance, and the wretched Theodora, at length exhausted and overpowered, fell senseless on the ground. The Moors easily succeeded in bearing her away, while poor Roque, who followed close, seemed, out of pity for her, to be reconciled to his own fate.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.







12

12







This book should be returned to  
the Library on or before the last date  
stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred  
by retaining it beyond the specified  
time.

Please return promptly.

*Princeton*

*5/17/60*

*Columbia*

*1/5/53*

~~NOV 29 54 H~~

MAY - C 1966 ILL

CANCELLED  
1629761